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The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK UNIVERSITY
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, AND
ACCEPTED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF G. STANLEY HALL : : :

222461
2-5-28

Reprinted from

The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education
Vol. IV, pp. 69-170

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

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I. Biographical

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born October 15, 1844, at Röcken, in Saxony. He came from a race of clergymen. The boy came of good stock and attempts to trace his final malady to hereditary predisposition are unconvincing. It is true the father died of brain trouble, but this was due to the concussion caused by a fall some four years after Friedrich's birth (28, I, p. 5). Shortly after the father's death Frau Nietzsche with her two children, Friedrich and Elizabeth, her mother-in-law, and an aunt of the children, removed to Naumburg, a town where pride in social rank was especially entrenched (28, I, p. 23). Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the family was careful to keep alive the tradition of their descent from a race of Polish counts, who, because of religious persecution, had sacrificed their all and come to Germany (28, I, p. 10 ff.). Nietzsche himself always made the most of this story, although his sister admits that the evidence which he collected in order to establish it is hardly convincing. The family was very religious undoubtedly, but that—as has been alleged—Nietzsche's subsequent violent antipathy to religion was due to too much piety in youth, I doubt. The boy was precocious, extremely conscientious, earnest, and proud, so that on being sent to the burgher school he felt so ill at ease that his mother transferred him to a private institution instead (28, I, pp. 27-31). Thence he was sent in due time to the famous Schulpforta (1858), (28, I, p. 100). At this time he was an excellent student, able, and industrious.

Even before entering Schulpforta Nietzsche had acquired certain characteristics that abode with him through life: fondness for the good form that one finds only in the best society, love of solitude, of poetry, and of music. As early as 1854 he composed a motet in honor

of his grandmother, and his first poetry also dates back to this time—his tenth year (28, I, pp. 38-75).

At Schulpforta his work was well received until he came to the *Obersecunda* when his great interest in music and literature caused him rather to neglect his other studies. It was at Pforta that he began to doubt the religion that had come down to him through several generations, a doubt that culminated in complete scepticism during his residence at Bonn University, which he entered in 1864. (28, I, pp. 199, 209.) He matriculated as a student of philology and theology but discontinued the latter subject with the close of his first semester. He was a very indifferent student during his year at Bonn, spending much time in attending concerts and theatres. Although he lacked all corps spirit Nietzsche joined a student society, but failing in his efforts to reform its mode of life, and disgusted with the clouds of tobacco smoke and the flow of beer that always accompanied a meeting, he was glad of an excuse to break with the club. This excuse was the departure of Ritschl, Nietzsche's chief instructor, for Leipsic. Nietzsche followed (1865), (28, I, pp. 223, 224, 228).

It was at Leipsic that Nietzsche happened one day to purchase in an antiquarian's shop, a copy of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. A single reading sufficed. Schopenhauer had made a new convert, one who, though he subsequently broke with his master, never again escaped the latter's influence (28, I, p. 231).

In 1869, before Nietzsche had taken his degree and in spite of his youth—he was not yet twenty-five years of age—the authorities of the Swiss University at Basel, upon Ritschl's recommendation, appointed Nietzsche professor of classical philology. After the young man had accepted the nomination Leipsic at once accorded him his doctor's degree *honoris causa* (28, I, p. 293 f.). The appointment should never have been made. The high honors only served to quicken a pride that was already excessive, and the work necessitated Nietzsche's over-exerting himself. His career began auspiciously, however, for not only was he well received, but at the end of his first year he was made ordinary (regular) professor with an increase of salary (28, II, p. 30).

Soon the Franco-Prussian war broke out in which Nietzsche took part as a volunteer nurse, his connection with a Swiss University forbidding his enlisting as a combatant. Unfortunately he speedily became seriously ill, was incapacitated for further service, and so re-

turned to his duties in Basel. It is a matter of regret that he forced himself to resume his lectures before he had completely recovered, for in January, 1871, he found himself under the necessity of seeking a leave of absence. He spent the winter in Italy in search of health. During this year appeared his first book, the *Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* which, though warmly received by a small circle of friends, especially by the Wagnerians, met with a very chilling reception on the part of philologists generally. Young men who were leaving the gymnasia with the intent of taking up philology were warned against Basel, so that Nietzsche soon found himself with few or no students (28, II, pp. 28 f., 58 f., 63-97).

It was during these first years at Basel that Nietzsche's relations to Wagner, whom he had already met at Leipsic, became intimate. They met often. While Wagner doubtless respected Nietzsche for his talents and manifested genuine friendship, Nietzsche on his part fairly worshipped the great composer who like himself was a devoted Schopenhaurian. Expecting marvellous things, impossible things, Nietzsche, when the disillusionment came, turned from his one-time friend with a disgust which, though psychologically readily understood, was most unjust to Wagner. But of this more later.

Meanwhile, the *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* (1873-1876) and a few other books had made their appearance in spite of Nietzsche's ever-recurring illness, which necessitated his seeking another leave of absence in 1876. On his return his unfitness to continue regular work became more and more apparent so that in the spring of 1879 he found himself forced to resign. The resignation was accepted with a grant of an annual pension of three thousand francs (28, II, chap. 18).

Nietzsche suffered from digestive derangements, eye troubles, and violent headaches that for a week at a time made existence a burden to him. Gould in his *Biographic Clinics*, ascribes much of Nietzsche's illness to eye-strain (37, II, 301 f.). Möbius, on the other hand, says that Nietzsche's short-sightedness was not an active factor (69, p. 49).

Henceforward, with certain intermissions (especially 1882 to 1887, during which time there was considerable amelioration), Nietzsche was an almost constant sufferer. Whenever there was a pause in his illness he wrote feverishly thus hurrying on a new attack. To make his life bearable he resorted to drugs, especially chloral, that did their

share in further undermining his constitution (28, II, pp. 433, 896, 918). He bore his illness with remarkable fortitude. Nothing could keep him from working at his books. Indeed, the last years prior to the outbreak of his insanity were his most productive. Finally, in December of 1888, while in Turin, Nietzsche collapsed completely (28, II, p. 897). Because of the alarming nature of late letters received from Turin Professor Overbeck of Basel hastened thither only to find his friend abed and out of his mind (28, II, p. 921). He was afflicted with expansive mania. At first he thought he was the King of Italy; shortly after he imagined himself to be the Emperor Frederick; later it was the Tyrant of Turin, with still others to follow.

Möbius assures us that Nietzsche's malady was due to an exogenous disease (69, pp. 1, 28, 29). His evidence for it is not wholly convincing. Gould, himself a medical man, assures us that "Möbius's gratuitous assumption that syphilis was the cause of his collapse is without warrant and is contradicted by every fact of his life, character, and illness. It illustrates the tendency of ultra-science to become non-science and even nonsense" (37, II, p. 321). And Professor Kaf-tan of Berlin in a letter to Georg Friedrich Fuchs writes: "I can but say that I have never heard of any such excesses on the part of Nietzsche, and from my personal acquaintance with the man deem that they must be entirely ruled out" (33, p. 19).

Nietzsche's sister traces that malady which forced him to resign his professorship to his war experiences, and his final prostration to the excessive use of chloral and an unknown drug.¹

It is a rather interesting question whether Nietzsche's warring ideas may not have played a part in bringing on his insanity, whether he could not have said, as does one of Byron's characters:

"I have thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame."²

¹ (28, II, pp. 45, 920). On page 918 of this volume she admits that in the winter 1882-1883 her brother confessed to her that while under the influence of chloral he wrote letters that later seemed to him to be entirely false. When she asked him whether such a condition might not influence his writings he assured her that on that very account he always scanned them closely after the effect of the drug had passed away.

² *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 8, VII.

Some seem inclined to this opinion. Kuno Francke, for instance, in his admirably sane and well-poised *History of German Literature*, says: "No wonder that Nietzsche himself in this whirlpool of conflicting emotions should have lost his own balance, that the night of insanity should have closed in upon him and extinguished even before his bodily death the lights of that exultant life which he loved so much (31, p. 560).

That a man's philosophy might possibly drive him mad Möbius (page 1) denies categorically. I suspect he has on his side the opinion of the majority of psychiatrists. It seems to me, however, that on the basis of common sense both alienists and laymen should be able to agree with Deussen when he remarks that nobody can say how far the germs of mental disease were dormant in Nietzsche, but if he had not deserted society, if he had not abandoned his profession, if he had settled down to a well-ordered wedded life, if he had allowed his powers to ripen gradually instead of forcing them in solitude, if he had abstained from the use of narcotics,—who knows but that humanly speaking, Nietzsche might have been among us to-day? (15, p. 98.)

Another open question is: In how far are Nietzsche's writings influenced by his mental insolvency? Nordau tries to show that Nietzsche's philosophy from first to last is nothing but the vaporizing of a man bereft of reason (75, p. 415 ff.). Evidently, however, he finds his row hard to hoe, for he does not play fair when he leaves the impression that Nietzsche's books were written between periods of confinement in a lunatic asylum. Any one, who is at all familiar with the story of Nietzsche's life, knows that this is unqualifiedly untrue. Even Möbius did not go farther than to claim that he could point out in Nietzsche's writings the precise moment when insanity set in.¹ Höffding (49, p. 145) holds Möbius's view to be absolutely without foundation; yet let us grant for a moment that Möbius is right, what then? Would he not have to admit that all books issued previous to the time in question proceeded from a sound mind? He could scarcely escape that conclusion even if he chose, but he says frankly:

"If Nietzsche's earlier writings were submitted to a competent physician, ignorant of Nietzsche's later history, he would say: The author is not only a

¹(69, p. 56). Möbius says that the first really suspicious passage is the close of the fourth book of *Gay Science*.

genial but also a very nervous man, yet of mental disorder in the ordinary sense of the word there is no trace, nor anything that permits the inference of later mental disease.'' (69, p. 51.)

Lichtenberger in his *La Philosophie de Nietzsche* (p. 83), warns us by saying :

"We must not, however, hasten to conclude from that, that the madness existed in Nietzsche in a latent state during all his life and that it influenced his whole work. It has been noised about, it is true, that Nietzsche was an inmate of sanitaria and 'that he wrote his works essentially between two sojourns in a lunatic hospital.' But this 'one says' has been vigorously denied as well by Nietzsche in the last year of his rational life, as by the persons of his *entourage*, whose evidence it will be difficult to reject in the absence of absolute proof. . . . It seems even, on the contrary, that the malady never provoked in him, even during the most violent attacks, any intellectual trouble. . . . This fact is affirmed a number of times by Nietzsche and is confirmed by his sister."

As opposed to Nordau, I think it is quite safe to hold that Nietzsche's earlier philosophy at least, should in no way be traced to his mental bankruptcy. On the other hand, I feel equally confident that few if any psychiatrists would endorse Lichtenberger's assertion that until the famous letter to Brandes (who, by the way, squarely opposes the view that all of Nietzsche's writings are tainted by insanity), (9, p. 225), there is no sign of mental disorder in Nietzsche's writings. I leave to the reader of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* whether a number of passages in that book do not bear a remarkable resemblance to those "peculiar, distorted terms of speech—senseless playing with syllables and words," characteristic of certain forms of mental disease (58, p. 24). I have in mind passages such as the following :

"Euer Eheschliessen: seht zu, dass es nicht ein schlechtes *Schliessen* sei! Ihr schlosset zu schnell: so folgt daraus—Ehebrechen!

Und besser noch Ehebrechen als Ehe-biegen, Ehe-lügen! . . . So sprach mir ein Weib: 'wohl brach ich die ehe, aber zuerst brach die ehe—mich!' " (73, VI, p. 307.)

Again, speaking of life Nietzsche says :

"Wer hasste dich nicht, dich grosse Binderin, Umwinderin, Versucherin, Sucherin, Finderin! Wer liebte dich nicht, dich unschuldige, ungeduldige, winds-eilige, kindsäugige Sünderin! (73, VI, 329.)

Read some of the songs in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, for instance that entitled, *Among Daughters of the Desert*, and the passage on

pages 313 and 314 of Tille's translation, and you can hardly escape drawing the conclusion that the author must be unbalanced.

In how far Nietzsche can be held responsible for the ideas he put into his later books it is impossible to say, at least at this time. His activity continued until he broke down in the streets of Turin, and although many passages in his later writings certainly suggest the aberration of the writer, nevertheless, I believe we need not regard him as wholly irresponsible until the shadows of night settled upon his mind never to be lifted again.

The remaining eleven years of his life Nietzsche, now a poor unfortunate who failed to recognize even his best friends, once the bitter enemy of any and all ~~mercy~~ commiseration, lived through under the tender care, first of his mother, then of his sister. He died on the twenty-fifth of August, of the year 1900 (28, II, p. 932).

II. Is There a Nietzschean Philosophy?

Nietzsche's first book was published in 1871; his last was published in 1888, the year before his breakdown. In all, including those published since his death, there are fifteen volumes. Students of Nietzsche are now pretty well agreed in classifying these into three groups corresponding to three periods in his life. Whatever name is given to each division, I find that nearly all writers on Nietzsche would agree in considering his first period one of pessimism and his last one of optimism, the second being a sort of transition stage. According to this view it would be impossible, then, to find any single term that would express tolerably well what Nietzsche stands for in philosophy, and this because during his so-called third period he is said to occupy a position just the reverse of that which he held at the beginning of his career.

Now I have no quarrel with this attempt to mark out certain more or less clearly defined epochs in Nietzsche's life and writings; there is sufficient ground for such demarcation and it proves very helpful, almost indispensable. What I do object to is the view that Nietzsche's last period is optimistic. If "optimism is the view that the world is thoroughly good; or, that it is the best possible world," as Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* defines it, then, surely, the Nietzsche of the third period is not, as I hope to show, an optimist.

It is true the *Century Dictionary* defines the word in one place as "the doctrine that the universe advances on the whole, so as to be tending toward a state in the indefinite future different in its general character from that in the indefinite past," but observe the significant remark that immediately follows: "this is better called *evolutionism*." "Properly," says this same authority, optimism is "the metaphysical doctrine of Leibnitz that the existing universe is the best of all possible universes." Limiting the word to this sense, one is justified in denying its ever being applicable to Nietzsche. To the objection that the word has a much wider meaning than that to which I intend to restrict it, it will suffice to answer that, in the first place, I am limiting the term to a sense that has not only the sanction, but the preference, of our best lexicographical opinion; and in the second place that, even were this not the case one has the unquestioned right, especially in philosophy, to give a term almost any meaning one pleases provided one carefully defines one's terminology at the beginning and then adheres faithfully to it throughout. As Professor Wendell, of Harvard, would probably phrase it, all I purpose to do is to drop the connotation of the word while retaining its denotation.

As opposed to the assertion that Nietzsche was first a pessimist and later an optimist I feel that however the surface currents in Nietzsche's life may flow now here then there, towards every conceivable point of the compass, one can none the less see beneath the upper maelstrom of Nietzsche's aphorisms and dithyrambs, his aestheticism and his positivism, his evolutionism and his impossible doctrine of the eternal recurrence, an undercurrent that all unconsciously to the man himself flows constantly and unerringly in a never-varying direction. The nature of this undercurrent is, I think, best indicated by Hollitscher's happy phrase—"pessimistic idealism." Unless I am in error that is the only term which can at all adequately express Nietzsche's philosophy. He never was an optimist in the accepted meaning of the word, but from first to last an idealist indeed, but a pessimistic idealist.

Before proceeding it is necessary at this point to consider certain objections that have been raised against the idea that there is anything unitary in Nietzsche's philosophy. It is urged that his writings are a hopeless tangle of contradictions. Nordau in his characteristically vehement way claims that the pretended philosophy of Nietzsche is

nothing but a compilation of passages that agree more or less with each other (75, p. 420). This habit of Nietzsche to contradict himself all who have read him are familiar with. He himself admits in his *Zarathustra*: "My to-day refuteth my yesterday" (73, VIII, p. 52). This is justified in an earlier book by saying: "A serpent which is unable to strip off its skin will perish. So will all those intellects that are prevented from changing their opinion. They cease to be intellects."¹ And in his *Menschliches Allzumenschliches* we read: "That one changes his opinions is for some natures as much a requirement of cleanliness as that one changes his apparel" (73, III, p. 370). Earlier in the same work we find the following: "I maintain that there has not yet been a philosopher who eventually did not despise, or at least regard with suspicion, the philosophy he discovered in his youth" (73, II, p. 237).

We grant, then, without cavil that Nietzsche is often self-contradictory. We grant more. Not only does he contradict himself over and over again in his writings, but in his life he is constantly at odds with himself. The Nietzsche of the *Antichrist* is another than he of the *Birth of Tragedy*. Think also of his change of position as regards Schopenhauer and Wagner. Then, too, could one imagine a personality so dissevered as the Nietzsche whom his friends knew as a man of "fasst weiblichen Milde," gentle, and urbane; and the "blonde Bestie" who stalks proudly through his last books.

All this being granted I still feel that we are justified in claiming that there is, none the less, such a thing as a Nietzschean philosophy. Take the man's life with all its changes and self-refutations, is there not a clearly discernible *crescendo*, a consistent unitary evolution? We shall see, for example, that Nietzsche's backsliding from Schopenhauer was not a mere vagary, a mere whim, but his logical—logical in spite of himself—outgrowing of his Schopenhauerian pessimism. Nietzsche held certain fundamental ideas. It is these that we carry away with us when we rise from a study of his works and it is these that constitute his philosophy. If he was never a systematic philosopher neither, for that matter, was Plato whose shoe's latchet Nietzsche was never worthy to unloose. The fact is Nietzsche was opposed to sys-

¹Nietzsche F.: *Dawn of Day*, Trans. by Johanna Volz. New York, Macmillan, 1903, p. 385.

tem making. "A systematizer is a philosopher," he says, "who will no longer permit his spirit to live, to spread mightily and insatiably like a tree; who absolutely knows no rest until he has carved out of himself something lifeless, something wooden, a four-cornered stupidity, a system" (28, II, p. 688).

But what as to these contradictions? From the first Nietzsche's mind was peculiarly organized. His orbit was eccentric. Knowing the mental make-up of the man, I really fail to see why we should not simply ignore passages that are manifestly out of harmony with his fundamental tone. We are not, it must be remembered, dealing with inexorable facts which if they conflict with theories, may never be ignored; we are dealing, instead, with the products of a highly gifted, but unusually eccentric mind. Considering the personality it seems to me that it is not unscientific to search his writings for those conceptions that were in truth his. In this way I hope to show that there is in reality a philosophy of Nietzsche, and that this philosophy is nothing more nor less than pessimistic idealism.

III. The First Period.

This might well be called Nietzsche's Schopenhauerian period. We have already seen how Nietzsche while at Leipsic became acquainted with Schopenhauer's philosophy, and how he straightway succumbed to the charm of this master pessimist. But why should he succumb? As we run over his life history to this date we find little apparent justification for such a surrender. Frau Förster-Nietzsche tells us her brother long mourned the loss of his father, but, surely, even she would not attribute Friedrich's pessimistic inclinations to this early loss. His educational advantages had been and were of the best, although it must be admitted that his training had been too much a one-sided emphasis of the classics. Standing well with his chief instructor his prospects were good. He never experienced the anxiety of the student who is financially hampered. Indeed, here we have the phenomenon of a young man, who to all appearances should be an ardent optimist, running headlong into the pessimistic camp. How can we account for this fact?

After all there is little that is genuinely mysterious about the matter. Because of the early death of his father Nietzsche lacked what

he himself calls, "the strict and masterful guidance of a masculine intellect" (28, I, p. 210). Growing up as he did in a family of women without ever feeling the strong, controlling hand of a father, Nietzsche developed a changeableness, a mutability, that accounts more or less for the sudden friendships and equally sudden ruptures so characteristic of him in later life.

Moreover, there is nothing quite so characteristic of Nietzsche as his over-weaning pride,—the one thing that survived his mental collapse. Is it a far-fetched assumption to suppose that it played a part here? Certainly, here was a chance to shine among his friends as the discoverer of a new philosopher with his new philosophy, and we know that on going to Basel a little later, in 1869, his avowed purpose was to revivify philosophy, to stir its dry bones by introducing into it Schopenhauerian views.

Whatever value such considerations may have it should be easy to account for Nietzsche's admiration of Schopenhauer merely upon the basis of temperamental affinity. Rarely was any more *frappant*. It is impossible for a *Nietzsche-kenner* to read, for instance, the late Friedrich Paulsen's essay, *Arthur Schopenhauer: Seine Persönlichkeit und Seine Philosophie* (82), without being reminded at almost every turn of Nietzsche. Schopenhauer no less than Nietzsche felt the "pathos of distance." The egotism of one was scarcely less pronounced than that of the other. Both men wished to be unique, refusing to share the opinions of the herd. Both hankered after appreciation yet professed to despise it. Neither ever married while both expressed freely their contempt for women. Both take the same attitude toward life. When Schopenhauer declares that, "a happy life is impossible, the highest man can attain is a heroic life" (82, p. 42), he proves himself in so far a mere forerunner of Nietzsche. And so we might continue to point out resemblances by reminding the reader that both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche are born aristocrats; both detested the discipline of logic; and both were aestheticians—exalted and magnified the importance of literature, music, and culture.

In how far Nietzsche's ideas merely reflect those of his master nobody can say, but after every allowance is made the resemblance remains impressive. Considering then, by way of *résumé*, how Nietzsche resembled Schopenhauer in his egotism, his distaste for logic, his attitude towards life, his love of style, of music, of art, of culture in

general, and of caste; remembering further that his early enthusiasm for Schopenhauer and subsequent disagreement is nothing unusual in his career; and bearing in mind lastly, Nietzsche's personal peculiarities, there is really nothing strange in his sudden assumption of pessimistic views.

We are told that on coming to Basel Nietzsche stands wholly under the influence of Schopenhauer. If so, he believes with his master that the world which we know through sense-perception is not a something that exists *an sich*. It is nothing but a mental creation, a mere *Vorstellung*. This idea in turn is not original with Schopenhauer but is borrowed from Kant whose disciple Schopenhauer acknowledges himself to be (94, I, pp. xi, xxiv). Behind things as we hold them in consciousness, as they appear to be, is the *Ding an sich*, with an existence independent of any conception we may have of it. What then is this transcendental "thing"? Kant declares he does not know. Schopenhauer could not rest there. He embarks upon a search for the *Ding an sich* and eventually returns professing to have found it in—the "will." Consciousness is the product of the "will to live" which produces the whole world of phenomena—a world that is nothing but a shadow. Only the will with its manifestations is existent. In our conscious lives we have many experiences, pleasant and otherwise, but since the latter far predominate we get a world of untold misery. Hence the question: Is life worth living? It is not, answers Schopenhauer, with every emphasis. Life is a tragedy in which the scenes change but the play remains the same; there is not only no progress but there is no hope for progress. Hence Schopenhauer's pessimism.

There is, however, a striking difference between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche just at this point. Schopenhauer's pessimism induces him to fold his hands in despair with a world than which there possibly could be none worse. But Nietzsche never folds his hands. He is an idealist and as such, though his idealism is pessimistic, though he also believes that the world is as bad as it possibly could be, yet, while Schopenhauer despairs of all progress, Nietzsche hopes for better things in the future. As Riehl in his *Philosophie der Gegenwart* (87, p. 321), admirably points out, Nietzsche admits all that pessimism claims only he draws a widely different conclusion. For him, too, the present is as bad as any pessimist could wish but there is a brilliant *Jenseits*. Hence his advocacy of a bitter, fearless, ceaseless struggle

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against the adversities of life. As he himself puts it, the question is : "Is pessimism necessarily a sign of degeneration? . . . Is there a pessimism of strength, . . . a courage that demands a worthy enemy against which it can prove its vigor?" (73, I, p. 2.)

In the preface written by Nietzsche in August of 1886, for a new edition of his *Birth of Tragedy*, occurs an illuminating passage in which he quotes Schopenhauer as saying that the tragic spirit seeks resignation. But Nietzsche will have none of it. So again in his essay on history in speaking of "der Thätige" Nietzsche says : "He flees from resignation and uses history as a means against resignation" (73, I, p. 295).

So while Schopenhauer is passive Nietzsche is active ; and in his earlier days at least, activity for Nietzsche means æsthetic creation. This is set forth in his first book on *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, with the sub-title *Griechentum und Pessimismus*, published in 1872. That Nietzsche with his enthusiasm for the Greeks, especially the early Greeks, and his training in the classics should write his first book on some theme related to Greek culture was only to be expected ; but that a young philologist should come forward with such a book could not but cause a sensation. As the title indicates the book treats of the birth of tragedy which, according to Nietzsche, originated with the Greeks. He defines tragic art as the "Kunst der Schmerzensfreude." How is it possible that a young and happy race like the Greeks should discover tragedy? To account for this Nietzsche professes to find in the æsthetic world two underlying principles : the plastic and pictorial or Apollinic art, and the musical or Dionysian art. The Apollinic artist lives in a world of dreams, an enchanted land, a land of visions. "The painter, the sculptor, the epic writer are seers *par excellence* ; yet all the time well aware that their world is one of appearance (73, I, pp. 19-23). That which we can handle, touch, and see ; that which has recognizable shape and is set off from other things, all that which appeals to the understanding is of Apollo's realm.

Distinct from this is Nietzsche's Dionysian principle which expresses but does not explain, which is vague rather than clear, which appeals to the emotions rather than to the intellect. It is the principle of intoxication comparable to that caused by the use of fermented liquors. It manifests itself in music, especially in music accompanied

by dancing as we find the two combined in the ancient chorus. "To a certain extent," Nietzsche says, "all rhythm still speaks to our muscles." On this point he would, I think, agree with Pascal—whom he otherwise dislikes—when that Frenchman writes: "Notre Nature est dans le mouvement; le repos entier est la mort" (79, II, p. 48). Under the influence of this Dionysian intoxication man unites with man and the world harmony is restored. Nietzsche thus exalts music to a place similar to that assigned to it by Schopenhauer who sees in it a revelation of the will of the world (73, I, pp. 112, 113).

The Dionysian principle originated in Asia; the Apollinie in Greece. Eventually the two came into conflict, first one, then the other proving the victor, until the struggle ended in a mysterious union out of which was born Attic tragedy in the form of the tragic chorus. Greek tragedy, then, is the Dionysian chorus that loses itself in an Apollinie world of dreams (73, I, pp. 19, 26, 27, 61).

Unfortunately for Greek tragedy, Euripides introduces the critical element, thus sowing the seeds of degeneration (73, I, p. 77 ff.). Yet it is not Euripides who is so much to blame, but Socrates who comes forward with the doctrine that knowledge is virtue. *J* It was Socrates who with no sense for the mystical could not comprehend the Dionysian spirit, and so originated the critical man. Euripides, following suit, comes to say something like this: "To be beautiful a thing must be comprehensible" (73, I, p. 85 ff.). This whole doctrine means nothing less than that if knowledge is virtue all man needs to do in order to escape his tragic environment is to increase his knowledge. What is this but optimism, and on an optimistic view of the world no tragedy can flourish. Socrates and Euripides, particularly the former, destroyed Greek tragedy. Hence Nietzsche's repeated virulent attacks upon the old Greek. "Everything about Socrates is false; his conceptions are neither fixed nor weighty" (73, X, p. 103).

Nietzsche's greatest objection to Socrates seems to be his humble origin. He has the "cunning of the plebeian" (73, VII, p. 121). "Socrates belongs by descent to the lowest class of people: Socrates was of the rabble" (73, VIII, p. 69). "With Socrates Greek tragedy turns in favor of dialectic: what is it that actually takes place? Primarily it is the conquest of a distinguished taste; with dialectic the mob comes to the surface" (74, XI, p. 108). That word "Pöbel" (mob) appears again and again. We have the quintessence of

Nietzsche's detestation of all that is Socratic expressed in the phrase : "Es riecht nach dem Pöbel" (73, VII, p. 120).

Modern culture is essentially Socratic, therefore optimistic, and hence unfavorable to the new birth of tragedy. However, and here, though Nietzsche was never more avowedly pessimistic than in his first period, we see clearly how he differed at the very start from Schopenhauer who, I feel sure, would have rested here. Not so Nietzsche. With typical idealism he points out that it was Kant and Schopenhauer, Germany's greatest philosophers, who once again set limits to human knowledge, thus making possible the overthrow of our Socratic, superficial, optimistic culture, in order that we may witness the so longed for "Wiedergeburt der Tragödie" (73, I, pp. 126, 128). Who is to bring about this final climax? Richard Wagner, the greatest Dionysian of the age.

Such is Nietzsche's first book.

There is one other volume belonging to this period, his *Inopportune Reflections* (*Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*), consisting of four essays, the first two of a negative, the remaining two of a positive character. In *David Strauss, der Bekenner und Schriftsteller* (1873), Nietzsche attacks what he calls the *Bildungsphilister* (philistine of culture), whose spirit he finds incarnated in Strauss. "As yet," he asserts, "there is no original German culture." The Germans, particularly since the war with France, think the Fatherland is the home of culture, but Nietzsche finds not a trace of it—not a trace. What the Germans call culture, he adds, is nothing but a "phlegmatic lack of feeling for culture" (73, I, pp. 179-185). "Culture," says he, "is above all the unity of artistic style in all the manifestations of the life of a people," and this unity does not exist (73, I, p. 183). "Have you," he asks, speaking to Germany at a time when in science and literature it stands second to no nation upon the globe, "have you even one intellect to whom you can point as having weight in Europe?" (74, XI, p. 156.) Nothing does Nietzsche see but a widespread worship of all that is mediocre. Against this spirit he wants to do battle.

In his essay, *Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben* (1874), Nietzsche discusses the educational value of history. He does not, as some writers imply, deny that history has an educational value; on the contrary, he says explicitly: "That life needs

the service of history must be understood as clearly as the proposition, to be demonstrated later—that too much history is injurious to the living.” The point he tries to make is that too much history is taught and that not rightly. Most history teaching and history study is injurious. But why? The fault lies in part with us for, “only strong personalities can stand history—the weak it simply extinguishes;” in part with teachers who force overmuch history upon their pupils. Nietzsche recognizes three kinds of history: monumental, antiquarian, and critical. Which of these three is to be taught a people depends upon its character, its aims, and its necessities, only never is the subject to be taught to satisfy mere curiosity (73, I, pp. 294-324). History should stand in the service of life, and should be written only by superior men, men with a knowledge of life.

All this has been lost sight of. At present history teaching checks natural development by keeping the race bound down by precedent. Especially do we see the evil results in the training of our youth whose instincts it uproots. We must begin by forgetting the past so that we may have free, spontaneous development (73, I, pp. 279, 307, 337-379).

We might attribute Nietzsche’s attitude towards history to the influence of Schopenhauer who asserts that history never can lead to anything more than mere *Wissen*, never to a *Wissenschaft*, because there is, according to him, no system—the touchstone of science—in history (94, II, Chap. 38), but even in a later period Nietzsche could speak very disparagingly of history as, for example, in his *Dawn of Day* (p. 260).

Frankly pessimistic as this essay is there is the implied hope that better things may be looked for with a reform of history teaching.

Nietzsche’s third *Inopportune Reflection* is his *Schopenhauer als Erzieher* (1874), a monument erected in honor of his great teacher whom he calls his “liberator on the way to himself.” To him Schopenhauer was a kindred nature whom he trusted implicitly, and whose manliness and rugged honesty he lauds constantly (73, I, pp. 309-402, 471). He “was subject unto none,” is Nietzsche’s highest praise (74, X, p. 247). Schopenhauer saw beyond the present. Who is capable of elevating mankind? There are three types: Rousseau, Goethe, and Schopenhauer, and the greatest of these is Scho-

penhauer—the heroic, willing to shoulder the sufferings of the true, willing to rob men of all that is false. How far in this respect does he rank above the German philosophers of to-day? "In part," says Nietzsche, "this is connected with the fact that at present chairs are filled by a feeble generation; and Schopenhauer now would not, if he had to write his dissertation on university philosophy, need a club, but would gain the victory with a bulrush." "Es sind," he continues in inimitable and well-nigh untranslatable German, "die Erben und Nachkommen jener Afterdenker denen er auf die vielverdrehten Köpfe Schlug'" (73, I, pp. 424, 483). Schopenhauer reveals the meaning of life and culture; teaches men to break with petty individual prejudices, and holds up as an ideal not happiness but a higher conception of culture. As Dolson says: "The entire essay is written in such a spirit of enthusiasm that the reader is lead almost involuntarily to feel that Schopenhauer is one of the greatest names in the history of philosophy" (18, p. 421).

The fourth and last *Inopportune Reflection* is *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (1876).¹ Just as the third *Inopportune* glorifies Schopenhauer so the fourth exalts Wagner as the highest realization of the Schopenhauerian in the field of art. Wagner seems to Nietzsche a volcanic outburst of all that is latent in art. Wagner's art demonstrates that nature inwardly is much richer, much more powerful, more happy, more awe-inspiring than timid humanity suspects (73, I, p. 536). He voices a side of nature that hitherto has been silent. Wagner's project in Bayreuth is the first circumnavigation of the world of art. It seems that not only a new art but art itself has been discovered. To attain his final purpose the great composer sacrifices all else. He is poet, philosopher, philologist, musician, historian, aesthetician, a *Gegen-Alexander*, who is to Hellenize an orientalized world. He harmonizes music and life, since his music is a return to nature (73, I, p. 500). He combines the Dionysian with the Apollinic. All previous music measured with Wagner's seems stiff, or as if one dare not see it from all sides. He is a revolutionizer of society. He has endeavored to burden himself with the weightiest laws as unremittingly as others seek relief from their burden. He has

¹ Lichtenberger speaks of "this celebrated brochure," as being "one of the most important works of the Wagnerian literature (64, p. 466).

revived the real German language. He is comparable to Demosthenes like whom he is both the last and the highest representative of a line of mighty artists. All of which means that Wagner is the poet and musician not so much of to-day as of to-morrow (73, I, pp. 548, 570, 571, 583).

Early in the year 1872 Nietzsche delivered a series of lectures entitled, *Über die Zukunft unserer Bildungsanstalten*. These are highly characteristic yet are completely ignored by many commentators on Nietzsche. It is for this reason and because of their interest from a pedagogical point of view that I have deemed them worthy of special treatment. Since my interpretation and criticism of these lectures can be found elsewhere—see bibliography—I shall not consider them here.

So much for the writings of Nietzsche's first period. What effect does such a glimpse at their contents leave upon one's mind? First of all we are struck by the immense rôle culture interests at this time play in Nietzsche's thought. His *Birth of Tragedy*, each one of the *Inopportune Reflections* and his *Über die Zukunft unserer Bildungsanstalten* centre about that. "Only," he says himself, "as æsthetic phenomena are existence and the world eternally justified." (73, I, p. 45.) Next, we cannot but be impressed by the over-shadowing influence of Schopenhauer and, to a less extent, of Wagner. Finally, it matters not whether it be the future of music or of history, whether it be the influence of Schopenhauer or of Wagner, or whether it be to lift a lance against the *Bildungsphilister*, in every instance we are struck by one characteristic that eventually must lead Nietzsche from that master whom he now worships—his idealism.

IV. *The Second Period.*¹

We now come face to face with a problem that seems to defy solution. I have already spoken once or twice of Nietzsche's liability to sudden changes due unquestionably to his nervous susceptibility to every stimulus. Now he drifts with the current, a moment later he

¹ This period is primarily that of the days of *Menschliches Allzumenschliches*. The *Dawn of Day* and *Gay Science* belong in part to this and in part to the last period.

struggles mightily against it. The slightest disharmony causes him to overthrow to-day what he but yesterday raised to the heavens. Nietzsche could not think as others do. *Stimmungsphilosoph* Tankscher calls him very properly (102, p. 22). Nietzsche is a man of moods, exhausts one mood to-day and then, finding himself in another to-morrow, upsets all that has gone before (see also 105, pp. 515, 516).

Lichtenberger (63, p. 6) tells us that Nietzsche reminds him of Ibsen's Brand who through good report and ill report faithfully adheres to his fiery device, *Tout ou rien*. That is it. With Nietzsche it is all or nothing but neither too long at a time. We need hardly hesitate to apply to him words by means of which he meant to disparage another. "To-morrow," says Nietzsche, "he hath a new belief, and the day after to-morrow a still newer. . . . To overthrow—that meaneth for him: to prove. To drive mad—that meaneth for him: to convince. . . . Verily, he believeth in gods that make a great noise in the word" (74, VIII, p. 67).

"Not the strength," says he in one of his posthumous writings, "but the duration of high sentiment makes noble spirits" (73, XII, p. 94). If we judge the man by his own test he can never stand.

As we have seen, Nietzsche's last *Inopportune Reflection*, that in which he glorified Wagner and his art, appeared in 1876. This was shortly before the opera season opened in Bayreuth whither Nietzsche journeyed with much apparent enthusiasm. Once there he soon became melancholy, and after a few days left Bayreuth, "profondément désenchanté, las et triste jusqu'à la mort" (63, p. 69), fully resolved to enter it nevermore. What had happened? Wagner and Frau Cosima maintained a profound and dignified silence regarding the affair, and such explanation as Nietzsche offered is no explanation. His later statement that Wagner's sudden collapse before the cross of Christ was so exceedingly distasteful to him (73, III, p. 6), accounts for nothing since Parsifal, to which he evidently refers, did not exist at the time, neither in words nor in music. Even had it existed only a very superficial reader could see in it a return on the part of Wagner to Christianity. Parsifal has nothing but the thinnest veneer of Christianity. It is essentially Buddhistic. The *Erlösung* in Parsifal is *Selbsterlösung*.

Nobody holds the astronomer responsible for the behavior of a comet whose orbit is unknown. For the same reason, once having established Nietzsche's eccentricity one is justified in refusing to consider one's

self in duty bound to explain all he may do or fail to do. Nevertheless, unless I underestimate the difficulty of the problem it is rather easily solved. Mauerhof (67, p. 317 ff.), suspects that Nietzsche until the Bayreuth visit entertained hopes of becoming, so to speak, Wagner's successor in the world of music. He asserts that at about this time Nietzsche busied himself considerably with that art. With such plans fermenting in his mind he goes to Bayreuth where, shortly after his arrival, it dawns upon him that his hopes can never be realized. The rest follows. One may admire Mauerhof for being able to hatch out such an ingenious theory—but surely he does not expect us to accept it. It is much too far-fetched. Permit me, then, to submit my own attempt at a solution.

Nietzsche's sister informs us that her brother had neither seen Wagner for two years nor heard his music for four years (28, II, pp. 236, 260). During these years, she would have us understand, her brother gradually grew away from Wagner so that the sudden rupture was more apparent than real (28, II, Chap. XIV). Mauerhof (67, p. 317) scoffs at this but unless he can prove Frau Förster-Nietzsche guilty of falsification, it seems to me she amply bears out her assertion by quotations from letters and other papers of the period. One thing that stands out with particular boldness is that Nietzsche was losing patience with Wagner's self-centeredness (28, Chap. XIV). And here we should not forget that if Nietzsche eventually crossed the line that separates genius from insanity Wagner came perilously near doing so. The two men had so much in common that one need be neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet to predict that their great friendship could never endure. Nietzsche's private papers show moreover, that he at times was not free from qualms as to the ultra-superlativeness of Wagner's art (28, II, Chap. XIV, and 73, X, pp. 397-412). We also know that Nietzsche believed that good work was being done by such composers as Brahms and Mendelssohn, although he was careful not to wound Wagner's pride by telling him so (28, II, pp. 179, 204). Yet I believe that at this time Nietzsche still looked upon Wagner as by all odds the greatest musician of the day, and so when at last the Bayreuth enterprise proved to come to a head he sat down to write his last *Inopportune Reflection*. As he wrote he worked himself, as he invariably did, into a fever-heat of enthusiasm, buried all his doubts and misgivings and gave to the world his *Richard Wagner*

in Bayreuth. While in this condition he hastens to the festival under the delusion that he is to see impossible things. Instead he sees that for which he always cherished a whole-souled contempt—a crowd, but what he had come to see he fails to find.¹ Keenly disappointed with the productions Nietzsche with characteristic revulsion forgets the past, forgets all propriety, and empties his vials of wrath and invective upon the head of one whose sole misdemeanor is that instead of being what Nietzsche had only just declared him to be—a quasi-divinity, he is after all but a mere man.

Knowing what we do of Nietzsche's psyche I leave it to the reader whether this explanation does not account adequately for the facts involved.

The chasm that opened between the two men was never bridged. Later in *The Case of Wagner* and *Nietzsche contra Wagner* Nietzsche gives vent to his pent-up emotions. "Wagner," says he, "was complete; but he was complete corruption." He "makes people morbid" (73, XI, pp. 50, 56), Nietzsche adds, and he "belongs only to my maladies" (74, XI, p. 2).

With fine sarcasm Nietzsche gives him credit for being "a scenic artist *par excellence*" and for having "immeasurably increased the speaking power of music; he is the Victor Hugo of music as language. Provided always one grants that music *may*, under certain conditions, not be music, but speech, tool, or *ancilla dramaturgica*. Wagner's music *not* taken under protection by theatrical taste, a very tolerant taste, is simply bad music, perhaps the worst that has ever been made" (74, XI, p. 29). Probably most telling of all, from Nietzsche's standpoint, is the accusation that Wagner "gained the multitude" (74, XI, pp. 16, 45). "That resistance which he encountered among us Germans," Nietzsche further informs us, "cannot be estimated highly enough, nor sufficiently honored. We defended ourselves against him as against a disease *not* with arguments, one does not refute a disease, but with obstruction, with mistrust, with aversion, with loathing, with a sullen seriousness, as if a great danger prowled around" (74, XI, pp. 18, 42).

¹ 28, II, p. 251. In 73, XI, p. 126, Nietzsche says: "My error was that I came to Bayreuth with an ideal, and so I had to experience the most bitter disillusion." Is it not possible, too, that Wagner's nervous music was no longer adapted to the now neurasthenic Nietzsche?

Can this be the Nietzsche who sang :

“ Hail thou, Friendship!
Earliest red of morning
Of my highest longing!
Endless often
Seemed the path, the night, to me;
And all life
Hateful, without aim!
Now will I live doubly,
That in thine eyes I have beheld
Victory and dawn
Thou dearest Goddess!” (74, XI, p. 253.)

It is only another instance of the complexity of Nietzsche’s character. He was a man who could only make a friend to lose him.

But, some one might urge, what has this to do with the philosophy of Nietzsche? It has everything to do with it. There is but one justification for devoting so much space to a single occurrence in Nietzsche’s life, and that is this: the rupture with Wagner exerted a powerful and lasting influence upon Nietzsche’s further career. The catastrophe, as we may well call it, shook him to the very foundations. He had deceived himself in—Wagner! After all, he may have asked himself, is not my whole view of life one big error? Am I right in fancying that culture and art are basal in life? Was not Socrates whom I have so reviled nearer the truth than I myself? Is not the critical man a greater man than he who is swayed by his emotions? If knowledge is not virtue, is culture? Or does knowledge transcend virtue?

Questions such as these must have swept through Nietzsche’s mind for when we next hear from him in his *Menschliches Allzumenschliches* (1878), by whatever alchemy transformed, he is no longer the Nietzsche of the first period, but Nietzsche the positivist, the intellectualist, the *Aufklärungsphilosoph*.¹ “ Lonely now and exceedingly mistrustful of myself I took,” he confesses, “ not without wrath, sides *against* myself and *for everything* that pained *me* and that was hard for *me* ” (73, III, p. 8). He is seized by a consuming passion for knowledge.

¹ It is true that Nietzsche’s positivistic tendencies can be traced back in his private papers into his first period, but they certainly received a most decided impetus as a result of the trouble with Wagner.

With the overpowering but momentary singleness of purpose that we have learned to expect from him he now finds himself profoundly interested only in the intellectual.

During his first period nothing so aroused his antipathies as Socrates and Socratism but now, although he cannot forgive Socrates for being of the people, he assures us there is a time coming "when one will prefer to take in hand the *Memorabilia* of Socrates rather than the Bible" (73, III, p. 248). We have not forgotten how Nietzsche's ire was particularly aroused by the Socratic dictum, "Knowledge is virtue;" yet now he tells us: "Socrates and Plato are right; whatever man does he ever does the right, *i. e.*, that which seems good (useful) to him according to his degree of intellectuality" (73, II, p. 46).

Again, during his first period Nietzsche did not deny his pessimism. Now he says: "Away with the words optimism and pessimism that have been used to the point of disgust . . . None but babblers find them indispensable."

Yet let us see what his attitude really is when it comes to fundamental things. In the very first aphorism belonging to this time Nietzsche says: "Enough, I still live; and life is not the product of moral thought: it wants to be deceived, it lives on delusion" (73, II, p. 5). We perceive at once that the atmosphere has changed. Should we doubt this, the further statement: "There is probability, but no truth" (73, II, p. 190) puts an end to all uncertainty. Our world is nothing but a mass of errors that gradually arose in the process of development, has become part and parcel of us, and now is necessary to our existence. All that we know is based upon error. Were absolute truth revealed to us it would spell our destruction. "Error has made man so deep, tender, inventive. . . . He who revealed unto us the essence of things would prepare for all of us the most disagreeable disappointment. Not the world as a 'Ding an sich,' but the world as 'Vorstellung' (an error) is so full of meaning" (73, II, p. 47). In the words of Voltaire whom Nietzsche quotes: "Croyez-moi, mon ami, l'erreur aussi a son mérite" (73, III, p. 16).

"Can we not turn about all values?" Nietzsche asks foreshadowing a position that he is soon to hold. "Is good possibly evil? And God merely a device and art of the devil? Is everything probably at the last analysis false?" (73, II, p. 8.) No wonder then that he

later adds: "We shall not permit ourselves to be burned for our beliefs; we are not sure enough of them" (73, II, p. 367). No wonder either that he raises the question, "Why do most of us speak the truth?" Why, indeed? "Solely because it is easier. One lie involves another and this calls for much mental effort to avoid detection" (73, II, p. 57).

Coming to religion he writes:

"How gladly one would exchange the false assertions of the *homines religiosi*: there is a God who demands of us what is good, who watches and witnesses every act, every moment, every thought, who loves us, in every mishap desires our welfare,—how gladly one would exchange these for truths equally benign, soothing, and beneficent as those errors! But such truths there are none."

There is no proof for the claims of Christianity hence it has no right to exist. "It is in the last analysis barbaric, Asiatic, ignoble, and non-Greek" (73, II, pp. 116, 118, 128). The feeling fostered by Christianity that one needs redemption from sin is based on a false psychology. Man is conscious of certain actions that, judged by prevailing standards of morality, are wrong. Comparing himself with the divine he sees himself in a bad light. He becomes afraid. A feeling of dissatisfaction arises that is complicated with a fear of future punishment. When incidentally this whole condition of dissatisfaction passes away from the soul and man loves his life again, then this appears to him so unbelievable that he can interpret it only as a ray of undeserved mercy coming from on high; this occurrence strikes him as one full of love and he regards it as a token of divine goodness (73, II, p. 135 ff.).

As one reads this passage one's thoughts revert inevitably to Lucretius who long ago wrote in his *De Rerum Natura*:

"And now the cause that through wide nations spread
Belief in gods and all divinities,
With altars filled cities and towns, and 'stablished rites
That flourish yet in many a sacred place,
'T is easy to explain; for even now,
The same deep-seated fear in hearts of men,
Raises new shrines to gods throughout the earth,
Impelling them to keep their festive days."¹

¹Bk. V, trans. by C. F. Johnson. N. Y., Lent & Co., 1872, p. 243.

Nietzsche's conclusion is that Christianity is wholesome for degenerated *Culturvölker*, but for a young race such as the Teutons were, for example, it is a positive poison with its doctrines of sin and damnation (73, III, pp. 122, 123).

We have, then, nothing to hope for from religion. How as to philosophy? The crushing answer comes: "Philosophy at best can furnish you metaphysical appearances (fundamentally equally untrue)." And as for morals, our whole system of ethics is at fault. We must begin all over again by looking upon morals as a problem that demands solution. You say nobody yet has dared to undertake a critique of moral values? Very well, answers Nietzsche, then this is my work. I, Nietzsche, shall do it (73, V, pp. 276-278).

He begins by distinguishing a threefold evolution of morals. The token that the animal has become man is that the utilitarian principle comes into play; the next step comes with the introduction of the idea of honor; finally man begins to decide that certain actions are good, others bad (73, II, p. 95). This idea of good and evil has a double root in history. He who rewards good with good, evil with evil, is called good. He who is a weakling and cannot be both grateful and revengeful is called bad. Good and bad are for sometime identical with distinguished and lowly, master and slave. Not he who works injury but he who is despicable passes as bad. The motive at first is no factor (73, II, p. 68). In another place he says that originally an action was denominated good or bad according to its effect upon a community. Soon this origin is forgotten and people imagine that actions as such, independent of their consequences, possess good or evil qualities, mistaking effect for cause. The terms "good" and "bad" are thus transferred to the motives and finally to the whole nature of man. In this manner we are made responsible first for the result of our actions, then for our actions, then for our motives, and finally for our nature. Ultimately we discover that our nature cannot be responsible since it also is the necessary result of other factors so that in reality man can be held responsible for nothing (73, II, p. 63). The history of moral values is the history of the error of responsibility which is based upon the pernicious doctrine of the freedom of the will, "an invention of the ruling classes" (73, III, p. 196). Because this doctrine has rooted itself in our very inmost being we believe that he who molests us is evil for had he not wished he need not have in-

jured us (73, II, p. 100). Why should we call the man who injures us immoral? We do not accuse Nature of being immoral when it hurts us, nor even do we bear an animal who wounds us malice. It is because of all things and creatures we hold that only man has the freedom to choose between two alternatives. But this distinction is wrong, and, since it is wrong, it is permissible to injure others only for the purpose of self-preservation—for punishment never (73, II, pp. 101, 104). What right have we to punish a man for breaking the law? “He had to act as he did; were we to punish him we should punish eternal necessity” (73, III, p. 212). He who is punished deserves it not: he is solely the means of warning against similar actions; likewise he who is rewarded has no merits: he could not have acted otherwise. Painful as the thought may be there is no longer a place in the world for praise or for blame. “There is no difference between good and evil action; at most a difference of degree. Good actions are sublimated evil actions; evil actions coarsened and dulled good actions (73, II, pp. 108, 110).

It is as if we hear one of the old sophists or Heraclitus himself, for whom Nietzsche professes unbounded admiration. Heraclitus too speaks of evil as being a relative good and good a relative evil.

But to continue with Nietzsche: we call those good who do what is moral, seek revenge, for instance, when that belongs to good morals as it did among the Greeks. To do bad is to do what is immoral among a certain particular people. Not only does the content of the terms “good” and “bad” vary among different peoples but it varies with the several gradations of society within the limits of a single nation. Suppose, for example, that a rich man robs a poor man, say a sovereign takes from a plebeian one whom he loves. The poor man thinks his master must be very vicious to rob him of the little he has; but in thinking thus he certainly does his superior grave injustice, for, the latter being accustomed to many things does not realize the value of a single thing to a poor man. Hence the sovereign does his subject by no means so great an injustice as the latter thinks (73, II, pp. 87, 89). Is it virtue when one cell is absorbed by another cell? It can't help itself. Is it wrong when a stronger cell assimilates the weaker? It can't help itself either (73, V, p. 157).

*from the
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So, then, “nobody is responsible for his actions, nobody is re-

sponsible for his nature. To judge is to be unjust. This is true even of the individual judging himself" (73, II, p. 65).

When a person is actuated by comparatively few motives, good or evil as they may be called, and combines with these energetic action and a good conscience, he develops strength of character. Under a given set of circumstances he sees but a few possible modes of action and so can decide much more easily than one who sees fifty alternatives. Compared with these strong but "bound spirits" (*gebundene Geister*) the "free spirit" (*Freigeist*) is weak, especially so in action.

This being so, continues Nietzsche, how can the *Freigeist* be made strong as well as free? By confining him; in his efforts to liberate himself he becomes a perfectly free spirit, *i. e.*, a genius, just as an energetic man who is lost in the woods is apt to discover a way out never known before. Therefore, abuse men, maltreat them, incite them against each other, provoke wars (73, II, p. 216 ff.). It is all nonsense to expect much of a race when it once begins to forget how to conduct a war. Nothing so arouses a people out of its torpidity, so organizes the destructive passions, makes a nation so indifferent to great losses, and imparts so bitter an impersonal hatred. Europe needs not only a war but the greatest and most frightful of wars, one that results in a temporary reversion to barbarism; failing this, it is doomed to lose its culture, doomed to lose its very existence (73, II, p. 355; see also III, p. 295).

What a change in Nietzsche since culture and art monopolized his attention. Yet there is no regret for the past. "One must have loved religion and art as one loves mother and nurse—otherwise one cannot become wise. But one must see beyond them, be able to out-grow them" (73, II, pp. 211, 212). Just as one in old age loves to dwell on the pleasures of youth, so man's relation to art will soon be but a touching memory. Probably art was never so profoundly and soulfully conceived as to-day when the magic of death plays about it. Soon the artist will be looked upon as a glorious relic to whom we grant honors as to few others because he is a wonderful stranger, come down to us from a past whose strength and beauty depended upon him. The artist ever was and will be youthful. To keep the youthful, even child-like element alive in mankind is the artist's privilege and duty. He can do this because he has been checked in his development while engaged in childhood's play, and because in

addition his training has carried him back to ancient times when the race was in its adolescent stage (73, II, pp. 159, 166, 207). Hence, while "the scientific man is the further development of the artist," and in so far ranks above him, it is the artist who has carried us to a point where we can say: "However it may be, life, it is good" (73, II, pp. 206, 207).

Just as science is an advance upon art so art is an advance upon religion on which it is founded. 'When religion breaks down before intellectualism the feelings that otherwise exhaust themselves in religion now relieve themselves in art.' Music Nietzsche mentions particularly as owing much to religion (73, II, pp. 160, 200).

This is the period of which Riehl says that he likes it much the best of the three (88, p. 58). As opposed to Riehl I must confess that I much prefer the *Birth of Tragedy* and the *Inopportune Reflections* to the *Menschliches Allzumenschliches*. During his transition stage Nietzsche got rid of his romanticism, it is true, but what does he offer instead? An intellectualism that has little but hard words for religion in general and Christianity in particular, for the culture of his day, and for the moral order of the universe. He has learned to magnify the significance of science above all other things and then tells us that the very thing which science so eagerly seeks, namely Truth, has no existence at all. Moreover, while Nietzsche was a pessimist from the very beginning, he was fully aware of it at first but now, though to my mind he is as pessimistic as ever, if not more so, he flatters himself he has outgrown his early weakness. When we recall the ideas Nietzsche held during this stage in his career as set forth—largely in his own words—in the preceding pages, his pessimism seems to me undeniable. Could you conjure up a world much worse than that pictured in Nietzsche's, *Menschliches Allzumenschliches*, a world whose inhabitants should be in constant, brutal warfare with each other; a world that offers not the slightest incentive for virtuous conduct because the bad are no worse than the good, the good no better than the bad, all are what the fates make of them, "all is inevitable—so says the new knowledge: and this knowledge itself is inevitable" (73, II, p. 111); a world whose art is in the throes of death; a world not one of whose religions contains a grain of truth, for, to cap the climax, that which all men seek, namely

truth itself, has no existence—those who think they have found it merely deceive themselves.

What would be passing strange had we not become familiar with Nietzsche's temperament and character is that this pessimism combines itself with idealism. He urges, for instance:

"Never regret anything. That would be adding a second stupidity to a first. If one has done wrong think of something good to do. If one is punished because of some wrong done, bear the punishment with the knowledge that one is doing good by frightening others from a similar deed. Every criminal undergoing punishment is justified in considering himself a benefactor of mankind" (73 III, p. 364).

If that is not idealism make the most of it.

Yet it seems to me that Nietzsche's idealism is now hardly so pronounced as during the days of the *Birth of Tragedy*. It is, however, none the less existent. He has merely transferred his affections from culture and art to science. Whereas he once worshipped Schopenhauer he now busies himself with the English positivistic school and with the writings of La Rochefoucauld. Pessimistic idealist Nietzsche is still though hardly as emphatically so as during his first period and that which is next to follow.

V. *The Third Period.*

There is little in the history of thought that is more interesting than to see how one man's idea is seized upon by another and carried to a length which the originator never dreamed of and might have resented. Take Fichte's *selbsttherrliches ich*—it is nothing but a development of certain Kantian ideas. For Fichte the ego is everything. Hence Novalis, whose philosophy is said to be a combination "of the transcendentalism of Fichte with the pantheism of Schelling," and who might well be called the poet of subjective idealism, Novalis defines philosophy as "homesickness, a yearning to be at home in the All" (31, p. 422). You see what a close relative such philosophy is to the Buddhistic teachings of *Nirvana*. For Fichte, then, finite man as opposed to God is merely a limitation of the ego—a non-ego. Feuerbach in his *Das Wesen des Christenthums* goes far toward reversing this idea. Instead of being the unlimited, God, for Feuerbach,

is nothing but the incarnation of man's ideals, which ideals have existence outside of him and are there precisely as binding. Man now is central not God. Christianity, says Feuerbach, is not a *Gotteslehre* but a *Heilslehre*.

It is not at all surprising that some one should rise up to say of these ideals what Feuerbach said of God. That some one was Max Stirner (Johann Kaspar Schmidt). Feuerbach says that what a man is worth so much is his God worth—neither more nor less. "Consciousness of God is man's self-consciousness; knowledge of God is man's self-knowledge." Know a man and you know his God. When man worships his God he worships nobody but himself. God is man freed from his bodily limitations, worshipped as another, as a being distinct from the self. You believe God is love because you love; you believe God exists because you exist, and so on. And so religion is merely to live a moral life, to make the most of one's self, to develop the God that is inmost in every one of us. God, then, is for Feuerbach the personification of man's highest thoughts. He has no real existence (25, p. 14 ff. ; p. 223), Stirner (100, p. 194) takes up and advances this idea by saying that justice, patriotism, honor, and all the other virtues, are nothing but abstract concepts, fixed ideas even, that man has somehow got into his head but that have no reality as such. Man lives for himself and is law unto himself. There is but one thing he may not do—what he dare not do; and there are but two limitations to what he can do—his own finite strength and the egoism of others. If I wish to murder, says Stirner, I have the right, provided I do not fear it as something wicked. Outside of me there is no right. If what is right for me does not seem so to others, what is that to me? Let them defend themselves. Though the whole world say I am wrong I care not for the world. Might comes before right. Whether what I do conforms to the teachings of Christianity, whether it is humane or inhuman, it is all one to me. If I but attain my end you may call me what you please. The egoist asks, what do I need? and takes a continent if he can and if he needs it to satisfy his desires. Did not Napoleon do this very thing? If you cannot defend what you possess it is no longer yours by right (100, p. 369).

Once man was the measure of all things but Stirner has got beyond Protagoras and the sophists. As Fouillée phrases it: "Selon Stirner, ce n'est pas *l'homme* qui est la mesure de tout, c'est le *moi*" (30, p. 1).

Kronenberg tells us that Nietzsche was strongly influenced by Stirner (59, p. 182). Others, notably Kalthoff (54, pp. 32, 33), believe that Nietzsche never saw *Der Einzige*, since in Nietzsche's day it was rare. The weight of opinion probably inclines to the belief that though we have no evidence it is extremely likely that Nietzsche did know Stirner's book. The internal evidence, however, to borrow a phrase from textual criticism, cannot be relied upon since the men had enough in common to admit of their independently advocating similar views. Be this as it may, Stirner and Nietzsche were *deux têtes dans un bonnet*.¹

I have spoken of Nietzsche's second period as a transition stage. Such it is in so far as his destructive ideas are concerned, for in this respect Nietzsche's last differs from his middle period only in being more extreme, more radical. But he did not rest here. He endeavored not only to destroy but to build, to build a positive philosophy of his own. This he embodied in his overman and his doctrine of the eternal recurrence.² Logically I should prefer to proceed at this point with those ideas that are little more than a development of his earlier thought, but the affirmation of life which he incarnated in his overman so colored his whole field of vision and so determined his whole outlook upon life during this last period that it will probably be best to begin with a consideration of this aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy.

Nothing is so characteristic of Nietzsche as his *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, the "Pilgrim's Progress," as it has been called, of Nietzscheanism. If you have read Nietzsche's other writings you will find very little in *Zarathustra* with which you are not already familiar, but that is no argument against the book. It is, as Nietzsche intended it to be, a poetical presentation of his philosophy. Nietzsche himself looked upon it as his greatest achievement, his masterpiece. In a letter under date of June 21, 1888, Nietzsche writes Mr. K. Knortz to

¹ Since writing the above, Bernoulli in his *Franz Overbeck und Friedrich Nietzsche* presents evidence which makes it more than probable that Nietzsche was not unfamiliar with Stirner's book. See Vol. I, p. 135; also pages 238, 239.

² Dr. Paul Carus (see *Monist*, Vol. XVII, No. 2) expresses a preference for the purely Saxon "overman" to the Latin and Saxon hybrid "superman." The reason for his preference is a valid one and I follow him in using the word "overman" exclusively. I take the liberty when quoting from Tille's translation of *Zarathustra* to substitute this equivalent of Nietzsche's *Uebermensch* for Tille's "beyondman."

the effect that he regards his *Zarathustra* as not only the most profound book that the German language possesses but also, from the literary standpoint, the most perfect (57, p. 36). In his *Twilight of the Idols*, he does not limit himself to Germany but asserts: "I have given to mankind the profoundest book it possesses, my *Zarathustra*" (74, XI, p. 218). I am not surprised, he informs us elsewhere, that people fail to understand my *Zarathustra*. To understand such a book the blood of the gods must needs course through one's arteries (73, XIV, p. 415).

Many of Nietzsche's adherents are content to accept his estimate at its face value. His sister, for instance, declares categorically that none but the "highest spirits" are competent to weigh this book (28, II, p. 422). After such an ultimatum it is, no doubt, presumptuous on my part to do that very thing, but I must confess myself a Philistine as regards the present-day Nietzsche cult. *Thus Spake Zarathustra* seems to me to be little more in essence than an incompatible mixture of Darwinism and Pythagoreanism diluted with a large volume of volatile matter which, from the standpoint of the philosopher, is presumably that intangible something called poetry. Distill the poetry and what you have left will prove an exceedingly small residue. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am aware that poetry was never intended to pass through the retort of the scientist. Not only Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* but some of the world's acknowledged masterpieces would present a sorry spectacle after undergoing a process such as that of which I have been speaking; but, poetry aside and looking at the book from the standpoint of cold philosophy I should say, at a guess, that if we were to cast overboard all the bombast and other ballast with which *Zarathustra* is freighted, its contents could be reduced at least three-fourths.

As the book opens we find *Zarathustra* in the mountains from which he descends to announce the doctrine of the overman. "And," so the story continues, "Zarathustra thus spake unto the folk :

'I teach you the overman. Man is a something that shall be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him?

'All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and are ye going to be the ebb of this great tide and rather revert to the animal than surpass man?

'What with man is the ape? A joke or a sore shame. Man shall be the same for the overman, a joke or a sore shame.

'Behold, I teach you the overman!

'The overman is the significance of earth. Your will shall say: the overman shall be the significance of earth. . . .

'Verily, a muddy stream is man. One must be a sea to be able to receive a muddy stream without becoming unclean.

'Behold, I teach you the overman: he is that sea in whom your great contempt can sink. . . .

'Man is a rope connecting animal and the overman,—a rope over a precipice.

'Dangerous over, dangerous on-the-way, dangerous looking backward, dangerous shivering and making a stand.

'What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in man is that he is a *transition* and a *destruction*.

'Behold, I am an announcer of the lightning and a heavy drop from the clouds: that lightning's name is *overman*'" (74, VIII, pp. 1-10).

In one form or another this overman is the burden of Nietzsche's song in *Zarathustra*. Who is this overman? Is he merely a high type of man, or a being as different from man as man is from the ape? The language of the passages just quoted unmistakably points to the latter view. On the other hand, Frau Förster-Nietzsche tells us that while the public has interpreted these words literally, Nietzsche meant to set forth a parable which should represent the vast gulf that separates the ordinary mortal from the exceptional genius. She insists that Nietzsche never held to the Darwinian hypothesis (28, II, p. 437 ff. and 521 ff.).

Now the careful Nietzsche student knows that there is much in Nietzsche's writings that will support the sister's contention. In his *Gay Science* he speaks of Darwin's "incomprehensibly one-sided doctrine of the 'struggle for life.'" He goes on to say that not necessity but abundance reigns in nature. The struggle for life is an exception (73, V, p. 285; also 74, XI, pp. 173, 174). He even ridicules the Darwinians, saying:

"You accept this mediocre
Reason of this English joker,
For 'philosophy'" (74, X, p. 248).

In his *Dawn of Day* he declares positively:

"However highly mankind may be developed—perhaps in the end, it will be on a lower scale than it was in the beginning—a transition to a higher order is no more attainable than the ant and earwig, at the end of 'their earthly career' can aspire to a kinship with God and eternity" (p. 44).

We could hardly ask for anything more explicit than when Nietzsche says :

"The problem which I here put is not what is to replace mankind in the chain of beings (man is an *end*) but what type of man we are to *cultivate*, we are to *will*, as the more valuable, the more worthy of life, the more certain of the future.

"This more valuable type has often enough existed already; but as a happy accident, as an exception, never as *willed*.

"Mankind does not manifest a development to the better, the stronger, or the higher, in the manner in which it is at present believed. 'Progress' is merely a modern idea, *i. e.*, a false idea. The European of the present is, in worth, far below the European of the Renaissance; onward development is by *no* means, by any necessity, elevating, enhancing, strengthening.

"In another sense, there is a continuous succession of single cases in the most different parts of the earth, and from the most different civilizations, in which, in fact, a *higher type* manifests itself; something which, in relation to collective mankind, is a sort of overman. Such happy accidents of grand success have always been possible, and will, perhaps, always be possible, and even entire races, tribes, and nations can, under certain circumstances, represent such a *good hit*" (74, XI, p. 239).

It is evident that Nietzsche was not, as is probably quite generally supposed, an unalloyed Darwinian. But as opposed to Nietzsche's sister I do not believe that the innumerable references to the overman in *Zarathustra* are one long parable. The language is too positive. No reader of Nietzsche can escape the conviction that, if not a Simon pure Darwinian he certainly held at least to some modification of the theory. As early as his *Inopportune Reflections* he says that a new custom, that of understanding, is growing within us and may in thousands of years be powerful enough to enable mankind to produce regularly the wise man as he now brings forth the unwise (73, II, p. 112). And in next to the last of his collected works he asserts that savages are, compared with the longest time, exceedingly highly developed men (73, XIV, p. 202). As I see it Nietzsche uses the word overman in a double sense. Sometimes it means nothing more than the highest representative of man as we know him to-day, equivalent to the "genius" of his first period; another time it means a new type of man, such an advance upon the present *genus homo* as he is upon the *pithecanthropus erectus*. In what sense the word overman is used in any particular case will depend, of course, upon the context.

The word *Uebermensch* is not original with Nietzsche. Goethe uses it in *Faust* and again in a preface to his poems the lines of which

are strikingly applicable to Nietzsche. The word is said to occur also in Herder's *Briefe Zu Beförderung der Humanität* (89, p. 44). That the term overman represents for Zarathustra an idea quite Darwinian, that the struggle for life and survival of the fittest are its warp and woof, he who runs may read. Says Zarathustra: "Much-too-many live, and much-too-long they stick unto their branches. Would that storm came to shake from the tree all that is putrid and gnawed by worms!" (74, VIII, p. 99.) Zarathustra does not counsel one to love one's neighbor. "*Spare not thy neighbor!* Man is a something that must be surpassed." "High above love for one's neighbor ranks the love of the remote, the most distant, the coming man" (74, VIII, p. 289; 73, VI, p. 88). "Upward goeth our way, from species to beyond-species" (74, VIII, p. 104). Once men said God, but Zarathustra teaches men to say: overman. Can we create a God! No? Then Zarathustra would like to know what business we have speaking of gods. He would have us, instead, create the overman, create his fathers and forefathers. Just as men once looked up to God, so now Nietzsche would have us fasten our eyes upon his overman (73, VI, p. 123; XII, p. 208). Ye ask, Zarathustra would say, how can man be preserved? Not so Zarathustra. He asks, how can man be overcome? He cares not for man but for the overman who lies near to his heart. What Zarathustra loves in man is that he is a transition, a destruction, and nothing likes he more in man than the ability to despise the petty folk who have won the mastery.

Zarathustra has not come to alleviate our sufferings. Never. Our lot is to be harder, and harder, for we must go to destruction. Only thus can man elevate himself to the utmost. What cares Zarathustra for our brief, petty sorrows. "Ye suffer not enough to suit me," he cries. Ye suffer not as do I who suffer from man. My wisdom is gathering like a cloud, like all wisdom that is to give birth to the lightning. But these men of to-day—I shall blind them, gouge out their very eyes by my lightning (73, VI, p. 418 ff.).

You see how Nietzsche's *Uebermensch* resembles Stirner's *der Einzige*. In a sense he is the vital entelechy of Stirner's ideal. On the other hand he is the very antithesis of Tolstoy's "christian." Tolstoy's ideal man suppresses his instincts, roots them out if he can, is an ascetic, sacrifices himself and all that he has for another though that other be the most worthless of wretches, an outcast from society,

a pariah of the street; non-resistance is his practice, you cannot drive him into war. But Nietzsche's overman is a powerful animal that instead of suppressing obeys its instincts and obeys nothing but its instincts. His conscience he does not obey for he has none. Laws and customs are nothing to him for, pray, what are laws and customs? Are they not so many shackles for restraining the masses? But the overman has only scorn for the masses. He would tread them under his feet. He is the aristocrat of aristocrats. He would write over his door the so hackneyed and yet so effective lines of Milton when Satan says:

"In my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven."¹

Indeed, Nietzsche says in so many words: "To rule—and no longer be God's hired man—this resource remains for the elevation of mankind" (73, XII, p. 375). Now that he stands "beyond good and evil" what to the overman is the everyday significance of these words used by everyday people? "*One does not understand great men,*" says Nietzsche, "they pardon their every breach of law but never their weaknesses." Pity, the overman not only knows not but he abhors it. He is pitiless. Whatever belongs to another the overman takes unhesitatingly if he desires it, for "what I do not want you to do unto me, why should *I* not do that unto you?" (73, XIV, p. 303). Thrasymachus said to Socrates: "I say that what is just is nothing else but the advantage of the more powerful" (84, Bk. 1). And Hobbes, in his *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society* says that for man, "in the state of nature to have all, and do all, is lawful for all. . . . In the state of nature profit is the measure of right" (48, II, p. 11). So Nietzsche would have us know that might makes right. The Caesars, the Borgias, the Napoleons, these are Nietzsche's heroes. A people is only Nature's round-about way of getting to six or seven great men (73, VII, p. 102). The masses and unfortunates are of no concern to Nietzsche. "I must insist," he declares, "on the *thorough prehension, thorough comprehension* of this necessity—that it can, under no circumstances, be the

¹*Paradise Lost*, Bk. I, lines 261-263.

task of the sound to wait upon the sick, to make the sick whole '' (74, X, p. 173). Much rather would Nietzsche exterminate those who have miscarried in order that the best may have everything their own way (73, XIV, p. 72). The sick are parasites. We cannot help being born, but once born we can decide whether or not we shall live. Men should be taught, especially by physicians, that a man who can no longer live proudly can do nothing better than to take his own life and die proudly (74, XI, pp. 192, 193).

Once rid of all these unfortunates, Nietzsche sees visions of the future—and what vistas open before him! Seized with rapture Zarathustra exclaims :

“O my brethren, I consecrate you to be, and show unto you the way unto a new nobility. Ye shall become procreators and breeders and sowers of the future.

“Verily, ye shall not become a nobility one might buy like shopkeepers with shopkeepers' gold. For all that hath its fixed price is of little value.

“Not whence you come be your honor in future, but whither ye go. . . .

“O my brethren, not backward shall your nobility gaze, but *forward!* Expelled ye shall be from all fathers' and forefathers' lands!

“Your *children's land* ye shall love, (be this love your new nobility!) The land undiscovered, in the remotest sea! For it I bid your sails seek and seek!” (74, VIII, pp. 294, 295.)

In his *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche expresses his mistrust of all systematizers and declares that their efforts betray a lack of rectitude (73, XI, p. 101). Confident as he was of his own significance it must have afforded him no end of pleasure to know that some day he would prove a sore trial to those students of philosophy who like nothing so well as a man who, though he stand with his back to the wall over against powers and hierarchies, is at least at one with himself. Nietzsche not only can not agree with anybody else but it is quite impossible for him to be self-consistent. In the very same volume in which he sings the praises of his overman and of the wal-halla that awaits him when the millennium is attained, he suddenly comes forward with what he regards as a stupendous discovery : that there is nothing but time that is endless, that not only the sum total of energy but the sum total of all possible combinations of matter is, although relatively so, not absolutely infinite. Already all possible combinations must by this time have been exhausted, so that the present arrangement of things must be a replica, a fac-simile, a mere

repetition in fact of what has been before. All that exists has existed an endless number of times, and in the future will exist an endless number of times, world without end. He who does not believe this must believe in a God.

That is the soul-stirring revelation that has been vouchsafed to Nietzsche which he generously communicates to the world. Soul-stirring it is. Just suppose for a moment, says Nietzsche, that one of these days a demon should steal upon you in your loneliest loneliness and say :

“ ‘This life, as you are living it now and have lived it, you must live again and again, numberless times; and there is to be nothing new about it, but every pain and every joy, every thought and every sigh, and all that is so indescribably little and so awfully great will happen to you again, all in the same order and succession —even this spider and this moonlight among the trees and I myself shall be again as at this moment. The eternal hour-glass of existence is ever reversed—and you, you mite of the dust, with it.’

“ ‘Would you not cast yourself down and grind your teeth and damn the demon who spake thus?’ (73, V, p. 265.)

“ ‘Now I die and vanish,’ thou would’st say,” thus speak Zarathustra’s animals unto him, “ ‘and in a moment I shall be nothing. Souls are as mortals as bodies.

“ ‘But the knot of causes recurreth in which I am twined. It will create me again! I myself belong unto the causes of eternal recurrence’ (74, VIII, pp. 319, 321).

And yet, because of his passionate love of life there comes a preternatural moment when Nietzsche can say, even to the demon who taunts him with his eternal recurrence, “ ‘Thou art a God. Never heard I anything more divine.’ ”

Here belongs Nietzsche’s best poem. Its charm is undeniable, but what is rather puzzling is that although it sings of the depths of joy its effective tone is that of melancholy. What to me seems the best English translation of the poem is that by Professor William Benjamin Smith which reads thus :

“ Oh Man! give ear!
What saith the midnight deep and drear?
‘From sleep, from sleep
I woke as from a dream profound.
The world is deep
And deeper than the day can sound.
Deep is its woe,—
Joy, deeper still than heart’s distress.

Woe saith, Forego !
 But Joy wills everlastingness,—
 Wills deep, deep everlastingness.''"¹

This translation is really remarkably good. It is unfortunate that Dr. Tille in his translation of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* failed so lamentably in the conversion of *The Drunken Song*. Much better than Tille's is Dr. Paul Carus's translation though he has hardly caught the spirit of the poem so well as has Professor Smith. No translation can be so effective as the original itself.

That is a prime characteristic of Nietzsche's last period. He glorifies life. The "will to live" becomes so strong that with all its misery he is not only reconciled to live his life over and over again but would do so by choice. He asserts that it is his great wish to learn to see in the necessity of things their great beauty. It is necessary to live and therefore he declares war against everything that is weak and decrepit in himself and others. Nay, since live he must he shall seek to make the most of life. And the secret for reaping the greatest pleasure out of existence, says he, is to live in jeopardy. "Build your cities," he cries, "on the slopes of Vesuvius ! Send your ships into unexplored seas. Live in warfare with others and yourself ! Be robbers and conquerors!" (73, V, p. 265.)

"No," cries Nietzsche, "life has not deceived me" (73, V, pp. 68, 209, 215, 245).

Thus it happens that Nietzsche who began his career as a disciple of Schopenhauer, during his later years stands antipodally over against him on the basal problem of life. Schopenhauer's fundamental value is "not to live;" Nietzsche's is the "will to live."

So strenuous is Nietzsche's affirmation of life that it leads the majority of writers on Nietzsche to emphasize this as his most cheerful, most joyous period. I have misgivings on this point. The very loudness of Nietzsche's tones strikes me as not the healthy outburst of one who cannot contain himself for the very joy of living, but sounds to me much more like the impassioned outcry of one who is voicing not so much his physical feelings as his inmost desires.

¹ See *Monist*, Vol. XVII, p. 251. The word joy in Smith's translation hardly conveys the meaning of the original *lust*. Our own "lust" would come nearer the mark.

However this may be there is no question but that Nietzsche thought highly of his doctrine of the recurrence of things. It is considerate, he tells us, towards non-believers. It has no hell nor even any threats. If you are not overcome by the truth of my teachings you have no sin; if you accept them you have no merit. If you would experience something that is worth while again and again arrange your life accordingly. Probably you think that much time will pass before you are born again. Do not deceive yourself, the interval passes like a stroke of lightning. My doctrine must be extended gradually. Whole generations must pass during its growth until it becomes a tree so huge that it can overshadow all future races. What, compared with this mighty idea merely to comprehend which many thousands of years are required, are two thousand years of Christianity! Remember, you have no right to my message until you have passed through every grade of skepticism. I insist on protecting myself against the gullible, against all those who believe too readily. I claim the right to defend my thought in advance. It is to be the religion of the freest, merriest, and noblest of souls.

The impossibility of reconciling Nietzsche's idea of the overman with his doctrine of the eternal recurrence of the same has already occurred to you. I shall come back to it later but must now hasten on to Nietzsche's destructive ideas.

I doubt whether a more fitting introduction to Nietzsche's views on morals could be written than a passage from Nietzsche's own hand which I quote from the *Antichrist*. You might call it the shorter catechism of Nietzscheanism. It reads thus:

“What is good?—All that increases the feeling of power, will to power, power itself, in man.

“What is bad?—All that proceeds from weakness.

“What is happiness?—The feeling that power *increases*,—that a resistance is overcome.

“Not contentedness, but more power; not peace at any price, but warfare; not virtue, but capacity (virtue in the Renaissance style, *virtù*, virtue free from any moralic acid.)

“The weak and ill-constituted shall perish; first principle of *our* charity. And people shall help them to do so.

“What is more injurious than any crime? Practical sympathy for all the ill-constituted and weak:—Christianity” (74, XI, p. 288).

Nietzsche as you see places himself above morals and brings our whole altruistic system to judgment (73, V, p. 143; VII, p. 53). Both religion and morals are due to a confounding of cause and effect. We are told, for instance, that vice and luxury ruin a people. Not so, says Nietzsche, vice and luxury do not precede but invariably follow degradation. We are told that this or that political party ruined itself by pursuing certain policies. Wrong again. The party was already corrupt, hence the ruinous policies. First comes degeneration then error (74, XI, p. 133). Take the case of conscience. Whence comes the evil conscience? It came to man when he lost his initial liberty and was placed under the restrictions of society. What misery resulted! The old instincts still asserted themselves but finding no outlet were forced to turn upon themselves. Thus originated the soul. The enmity, cruelty, and lust for torture that once vented themselves upon others now turned with malignant fury upon the individual himself and gave him a "bad conscience."

Such is the origin of the "bad" conscience which only the Greeks knew how to escape. It must be evident then that "right" and "wrong" as such have no meaning at all. Life is destructive, from its very nature it works injury, and any other conception of it is false (74, X, pp. 92, 104 ff.). Hence the criminal must not be despised. He is at least a man who risks his life, his honor, his liberty. Nor should his punishment be deemed a sort of expiation. Punishment does not purify because to trespass does not sully (73, XV, p. 353). As Nero says, in Stephen Phillips's play by that name,

"Be the crime vast enough it seems not crime."¹

At this point it is proper to consider Nietzsche's theory of the origin of punishment. He asserts that during the greater part of man's history no offender was punished because he was held responsible for his deed, but rather because the anger of his victim was aroused by the injury suffered, which anger discharged itself upon the aggressor. The whole idea of punishment is based upon the supposition that the creditor who cannot collect what is due him, in true Shylock fashion satisfies himself by causing the debtor pain. That is to say,

¹ Phillips, Stephen: *Nero*, N. Y., 1906, p. 137.

the whole process at first was not one of punishment, as we understand it, at all. The motive was merely to render the offender harmless and at the same time to satisfy the just demand of the victim for compensation. Moreover, it is a means of arousing in the wrong-doer, and in others too, a sense of fear that may deter all from like acts in the future. But, as is taught to-day, that punishment is designed primarily to touch the offender's conscience so as to awaken in him a feeling of guilt, is an assumption that flagrantly violates sound psychology. Is it not true that genuine remorse is rare among criminals? And surely, our prisons and houses of correction are hardly the places to arouse such feelings. Nay, punishment hardens and does not soften; it arouses violent enmity against that society which punishes, and embitters the criminal's heart so that he lusts to wreak vengeance for the injury done him. Does not society itself do those very things, legally to be sure, but does it not do those very things for which it punishes the single offender? Speak to me not of punishment as improving a man, says Nietzsche, for *tame* him it may but *make better? never* (74, X, pp. 72, 93-104).

No less important than the question of right and wrong is the question of good and evil. Whence came these ideas? According to Nietzsche historians are far beside the mark when they would have us believe that unselfish actions in primitive times were lauded as "good" by those who profited by them, and that subsequently when this origin was lost sight of unselfish actions were felt to be good simply because they were habitually so denominated. This is wrong from start to finish. The judgment "good" never originated with the recipients of goodness. Nay, but it was the good themselves, *i. e.*, the noble, the strong, the men of first rank, men who felt the pathos of distance, it was they who created values and named them as they pleased. Utility? What was utility to them? Good has no necessary connection whatever either with utility or with unselfish actions. Herbert Spencer's theory that good is what has proved useful in the experience of the race, bad what has proved the reverse, is therefore, untenable.

Nietzsche claims that he hit upon the real origin of the terms in question while engaged in philological studies. He says:

"Pushing this inquiry I found that they [*i. e.*, the names for "good" in the different languages] all pointed to one and the same *shifting of concepts*,—that 'superior,' 'noble' in its caste sense, was in every instance the fundamental con-

cept from which 'good' in the sense of 'superior in sentiment,' noble in the sense of 'with lofty sentiment,' 'privileged in sentiment' necessarily developed;—a development running in all cases parallel with that other one which causes 'mean,' 'mobilike,' 'common,' to turn at last into the concept of 'bad.' The most striking instance, illustrating this latter development, is presented by the German word 'schlecht' itself. It is identical with 'schlicht' simple. Compare 'schlechtweg' (simply, plainly) and 'schlechterdings' (absolutely). It denoted originally the simple, the ordinary man, in contradistinction to the gentleman, no secondary or equivocal sense attaching as yet to its meaning. About the time of the Thirty-Years' War—quite late, we see—the sense shifted into that which obtains at present."¹

With further etymologies Nietzsche endeavors to fortify his assertions but scholars generally do not accept his conclusions. Brandes, who must be classed among the admirers of Nietzsche, calls the etymologies "zweifelhaft" (9, p. 175). Dr. Tille, who edits the English translation of Nietzsche's works, declares Nietzsche's proof "a complete failure." With a solitary exception where the derivation is said to be philologically possible, Nietzsche's explanations are pronounced by Tille, "all wrong or perfectly arbitrary" (73, X, p. xvii).

Upon this foundation of sand Nietzsche builds his theory. The good originally were the mighty. Actions now brandmarked immoral were then unmoral. Altruism was an unknown word. This noble-morality rooted in a triumphant assertion of the self (73, VII, p. 132 ff.; 74, XI, p. 56). His morality is that of self-glorification. He is pitiless, yet aids the unfortunate, not because of pity but because of his superabundance of strength. Nietzsche quotes an old Scandinavian saga as saying, "a hard heart Wotan laid in my breast." Such a man takes pride in that he knows no pity, and so the hero of the saga adds warningly: "Who in youth does not already have a hard heart, shall never have one" (73, VII, p. 239 ff.).

Picture to yourself a forerunner of the overman and you will have a very good idea of Nietzsche's primitive master among men. He is one of those who, in the language of Thrasymachus, "are able to do injustice in perfection" (84, Bk. I). His opposite is the "herd ani-

¹(74, X, pp. 22, 23). It is interesting to note that Stirner in his *Der Einzige*, p. 173, says: "Die christliche Anschauungsweise hat überhaupt allmählich ehrliche Wörter zu unehrlichen umgestempelt; warum sollte man sie nicht wieder zu Ehren bringen? So heisst 'Schimpf im alten Sinne so viel als Scherz ; 'Frech' bedeutete früher nur kühn, tapfer; 'Frevel' war nur Wagniss! Bekannt ist, wie scheel lange Zeit das Wort 'Vernunft' angesehen wurde."

mal" (Heerdenthier) whose heart is filled with envy because of the superiority of his master. Hence he calls this master "evil." Only the lowly, the weak, the poor, the suffering, the despicable, are "good" in his eyes. But in the eyes of his master he is the narrow utilitarian, the humble, the diminutive, the dog-like man, the mistrustful, the fearful, the coward, the sycophant who permits himself to be maltreated. Above all he is a liar. All aristocrats agree that the common people are untruthful (73, VII, p. 239 ff.).

Typical herd-animal is the priest, the most impotent of men. If we do not see in him the advocate and savior of the herd we utterly fail to grasp his vast historic mission. The world of suffering is his kingdom. He must be both weak and strong—weak in order that he may understand the weak, strong in order that he may hold their confidence.

"He brings with him salves and balms, no doubt whatever; but before acting as a leach he must inflict the wound. Then, in the very act of soothing the pain caused by the wound, *he will at the same time pour poison into the wound*. For in this art he is master, this great sorcerer and tamer of beasts of prey in whose presence whatever is sound, of necessity becomes sick, and whatever is sick tame" (74, X, pp. 173, 174).

It is due to a certain deep-laid scheme of the Jews that Christian morality, a morality that is fit for none but slaves, has gained the mastery. And such is our present despicable morality. The "blond beast" has been tamed. He is no longer permitted to roam about as he pleases, to act as his instincts guide him, but is bound and fettered with forms, conventions, laws, and statutes. To-day none but the weak are good, none but the bad are strong. Our morality of to-day protects the herd-animal and persecutes the masterful man as one who is inimical to the public weal. It teaches man to hate the very thing that only makes man great—the will to power, compared with which nothing else has value. Morality to-day is dominated by the herd-animal, and as such, while it hunts down the Napoleonic spirit, it takes the *Schlechtweggekommenen* under its wing; and the foster-mother of our pinchbeck, tartuffian morality is—Christianity.

Before considering Nietzsche's attack upon Christianity it will prove interesting to go back and trace the development of his anti-religious ideas. A direct descendant of not less than several generations of

clergymen his early expressions are such as to accord well with family tradition. This is clearly brought out especially by his early poems, from which I should like to quote but space forbids. I would refer especially to the Biography, Vol. I, pages 172 and 194.

On leaving Schulpforta, though troubled by doubt, Nietzsche speaks of experiencing more vividly than ever before the love of "the faithful God" (28, I, p. 194). About this time appeared Strauss's *Leben Jesu*. During the following year, while in residence at Bonn University, Nietzsche and his friend Deussen busied themselves with Strauss's book. Deussen ventured to express his approval to which Nietzsche replied: "The matter has serious consequences. If you forsake Christ you will be obliged to renounce God also" (15, p. 20). It is apparent that Nietzsche did not find it easy to cast off the impression made by years of early training. However, although he had registered for courses in theology as well as in philology, Nietzsche very soon dropped all but the latter. His sister becoming uneasy as to his religious views wrote to him concerning them, to which he replied in June of 1865, somewhat as follows: Should one believe what conforms to the wishes of one's relatives, is most agreeable to oneself, and so forth, or should one willingly sacrifice all such things for the sake of truth, even when that truth itself is not at all agreeable? He continues:

"Certainly, faith alone blesses, not that which is objective, which stands behind faith. I write this, dear Lisbeth, solely to meet the common arguments of the faithful who appeal to their inner experiences and deduce therefrom the infallibility of their faith. Every genuine faith is infallible; it furnishes that which the believing person hopes to find in it, but it does not furnish the slightest support for founding an objective truth" (28, I, p. 216).

Nietzsche's final and absolute break with Christianity dates from the time when he accepted the leadership of Schopenhauer. During his first period Nietzsche practically ignored Christianity in his writings. What his attitude was during his transition days has been touched upon in its proper place. Before taking up the further development of these views I want to call attention to a striking page in the seventh volume of his collected writings. If you wish to learn, says Nietzsche in substance, where a man belongs in the social scale, test his ability to reverence things of first rank. The manner in which Europe has, on the whole, maintained respect for the Bible is probably the best result of the refinement of manners that Europe owes to Christianity.

We have gained much when the masses have finally learned that they must not touch everything, that there are sacred experiences witnessing which it behooves them, as if on holy ground, to remove their shoes and to keep at a distance their smutty hands. Nothing is so disgusting as the lack of shame with which our modern *Gebildeten* dare to touch and taste everything (73, VII, pp. 249, 250).

What a pity that Nietzsche did not take his own lesson to heart! But I forget. Nietzsche, of course, stands "six thousand feet" above the rest of humanity. He, as the grand exception, may do what unto ordinary mortals is interdicted. Did he not almost verbally say, when it came to criticising Wagner: It is a matter of course that I do not lightly grant anybody the right to make my judgment of Wagner his own. This irreverent rabble that are as thick as vermin these latter days, should not even be permitted to mention so great a name as that of Richard Wagner, be it in praise or in blame (73, XIV, p. 378).

Had Nietzsche only so much as half applied the above-mentioned test to himself we should have been spared many a passage in which he "touches" and "tastes" of things for whose perception he lacks the proper sense-organs; passages in which he violates every canon of taste; passages so vitriolic that be he ever so irreligious no normal man who respects the feelings of thousands and hundreds of thousands of his fellow-men, could possibly write; passages in which Nietzsche

"with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war."¹

All the world stands ready to listen to a man with convictions who brings forward the reasons for his belief or unbelief, but why should we listen to one who, conscious apparently of his dialectic deficiencies, thinks to administer a fatal thrust when he says: "One does not refute Christianity, one does not refute a disease of the eye" (74, XI, p. 55). Or again: "To-day our taste decides against Christianity; not our arguments" (73, X, p. 168). On this basis Nietzsche proceeds not to argue God, Christianity, and all that is religious out of existence; not that, for his arguments are flimsy; what he does is to hurl his Zarathustrian thunderbolts at all that others hold sacred. Surely

¹ *Paradise Lost*, Bk. I, lines 41-43.

Eckermann was right when he said to Goethe: "It is no great art to be clever when one has respect for nothing" (22, I, p. 178).

Frau Förster-Nietzsche tells us that the *Antichrist* as we know it was not published by her brother. Had he done so, she adds, he might have toned it down a little (28, II, p. 883). The book, therefore, strictly speaking, is a posthumous one, completed moreover only just before he broke down in Turin. Undoubtedly Nietzsche was already under the stress that preceded his break-down, which, all things considered, inclines one all the more to slight the work. However, since it is quite impossible to say in how far Nietzsche was irresponsible at the time of writing the book in question, and since the ideas embodied in the *Antichrist*, in essence at least, can be found in his earlier works, we shall, I presume, be under the necessity of considering its contents. I will say, though, that I shall avoid repeating here passages that are nothing but empty blasphemy and that contain no pretense of argument. Scenes such as the *Eselsfest* in *Zarathustra* are simply beneath serious criticism. I fully agree with Düringer—who is a jurist and not a theologian—when he says, in commenting on this *Eselsfest* incident, that if, as Nietzsche's adherents maintain, he is not one mentally diseased and irresponsible at the time of writing *Zarathustra*, one must declare him as insolent a man as one can conceive (20, p. 77).

Responsible or in part irresponsible, Nietzsche perceived what he expresses thus:

"Christianity is a system, a view of things, consistently thought out and *complete*. If we break out of it a fundamental idea, the belief in God, we thereby break the whole into pieces: we have no longer anything determined in our grasp! Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *can not* know what is good for him and what is evil; he believes in God, who alone knows. Christian morality is a command, its origin is transcendent, it is beyond all criticism, beyond all right of criticism; it has solely truth, if God is truth,—it stands or falls with the belief in God." (74, XI, p. 164.)

"But, ye Christians, what do ye?" one can imagine Zarathustra asking, "I praise God," answers the saint in the forest. Alack, and alas, says Zarathustra unto his heart when he is alone again: "'Can it actually be possible! This old saint in his forest hath not yet heard aught of *God being dead*.'" (74, VIII, p. 4.)

This then is Nietzsche's great discovery—"God is dead." As if

others had not come to the same conclusion before. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God," says the psalmist (Psalms XIV: 1; LIII:1), proving incidentally that the idea is nothing new.

Probably there will be a time, continues Nietzsche, when the ideas of God and sin will seem no more weighty to man than a child's toy, a child's sorrow, and probably he will then find himself in need of some other toy (73, VII, p. 81). The more's the pity. How much more of goodness and happiness there would be among men if they were to give unto each other what until now they have rendered unto God.

There is but one people that has the right to a God—a people that believes in itself. Such a people recognizes in God its own virtues, but just as soon as a race decays, just so soon does its God decay. "He becomes everybody's God." There is no alternative: Gods "are either the will to power—and so long they will be national Gods—or else the impotence to power—and then they necessarily become *good*." God becomes the God of those who euphoniously call themselves "good," which being interpreted means "weak." The Christian concept of God, therefore, is one of the worst that has ever been reached (74, XI, p. 254 ff.). It is nothing more nor less than Plato's concept—for Christianity is nothing but Platonism so modified as to fall within the comprehension of the common people—that God is truth, and that truth is godly (73, V, p. 275; VII, p. 5). And yet the theologian speaks of truth when he knows right well that there is no such thing. The priest is not ignorant of the fact that there is neither God, nor sinner, nor Saviour, nor free will, nor a moral order of the world. We all know that the Church—"that form of deadly hostility to all uprightness"—has invented instruments of torture in bringing to the fore such concepts as an immortal soul, a last judgment, and another world, concepts by means of which she keeps men in servitude. What has happened that statesmen, and warriors even still unblushingly call themselves Christians? In fact real Christians there have never been, according to Nietzsche. The Christian is nothing but a psychological self-misunderstanding.

As a European movement Christianity was from the beginning, a movement initiated by the refuse of society. Its success was not due to the decay of civilization, whatever learned idiots may say to the contrary. It was the masses who conquered, it was Christian democ-

pretty
word
(he has)

ratism that conquered. Here Nietzsche reminds his readers of Paul's expression concerning the weak, the foolish, the base, and the despised things of this world as being chosen of God. It was the Christians who destroyed a superior civilization (74, XI, p. 291 ff.).

Indeed, Christians and anarchists, for Nietzsche stand on the same level; both have the same motive of destruction as can be amply demonstrated by an appeal to history. It was the Christians who, like anarchists, destroyed the *imperium Romanum*. Christianity was its vampire. The *imperium Romanum* was the mere beginning of a structure calculated to outlast milleniums. It was sound enough to endure bad rulers and live but it could not withstand the "corruptest kind of corruption,"—Christianity (74, XI, p. 321 ff.).

Even yet Epicurus, through Lucretius, would have counterminded Christianity and rendered its machinations vain had it not been for—Paul. But for Paul, declares Nietzsche, there never would have been such a world-religion as Christianity (74, IV, p. 62). This assertion that Paul and not Jesus himself was the real founder of Christianity, wild as it may seem to some of us, has of late been vigorously supported by such *savants* as Bousset, Weinel, Wrede, and others. They protest that many of the fundamentals of Christian dogmatics are foreign to the teachings of Christ. Like Nietzsche they declare that these unsound elements were introduced very early by Paul. It was Paul, they argue, who corrupted the Christianity of Jesus (4, I, p. 106). Of course, the charge has not been allowed to pass unchallenged (52, p. 399; also *Nation*, vol. 85, no. 2205). While it would be out of place to enter into the merits of the question here, justice to Nietzsche requires mention of the fact that his contention finds some support.

To return to Nietzsche's argument: How could Paul light such a conflagration? Simply by saying: "'If Christ had not been raised from the dead your faith is vain.'" Thus arose the doctrine of personal immortality, a doctrine that violates, that annihilates reason, that equates all men so that every individual can claim eternal importance, and that deserves nothing but contempt (74, XI, pp. 299, 302; also 65, I, p. 256).

That is Nietzsche's indictment against Buddhism and Christianity, that both by one means or another, have tried and are trying to preserve, to keep alive as best they can, the diseased, the crippled, the

incurable, the degenerate, who constitute the bulk of mankind and who should be allowed to go to destruction. These two religions are to blame for the fact that man to-day does not represent a higher type. They are responsible because they preserve what should have been destroyed" (73, VII, pp. 88, 89).

Last of all we must consider Nietzsche's attitude towards Jesus. He declares that Renan is completely beside the mark when he finds in Jesus a "genius" and a "hero." Christianity is the very antithesis of the heroic. It is passive, submissive, resists not evil. As for the word "genius" it is entirely inappropriate.

"The kingdom of heaven belongs to children. . . . One might, with some tolerance of expression, call Jesus a 'free spirit'—he does not care a bit for anything fixed: the word *killeth*, all that is fixed *killeth*, the concept, the *experience* of 'life' as he alone knows it, is with him repugnant to every kind of expression, formula, law, belief or dogma. He speaks merely of the inmost things: 'life,' or 'truth,' or 'light,' are his expressions for the inmost things,—everything else, the whole of reality, the whole of nature, language itself, has for him merely the value of a sign, or a simile. . . . He had no need of any formulae or rites for intercourse with God—not even of prayer. He has settled accounts with the whole of the Jewish expiation and reconciliation doctrine; he knows that it is by the *practice* of life alone, that one feels himself 'divine,' 'blessed,' 'evangelical,' at all times a 'child of God.' . . . If I understand anything of this great symbolist, it is that he only took *inner* realities as realities, as 'truths,'—that he only understood the rest, all that is natural, temporal, spatial, historical, as signs, as occasion for similes. The concept of the 'Son of Man,' is not a concrete person belonging to history, some individual, solitary case, but an 'eternal' fact, a psychological symbol freed from the concept of time" (74, XI, pp. 278-289).

How any one who knows the man's writings from alpha to omega can say, as does Frau Förster-Nietzsche, that it is wholly wrong to think that her brother hated Christianity since until his last conscious moment he cherished a tender love for its founder (28, II, pp. 764, 765), passes human understanding. Nietzsche hated Christianity with a fierceness so intense that even he could not find words enough, nor words scornful and malevolent enough to express his undying animosity. Listen to this last passage from the *Antichrist*, which I admit with much reluctance only to answer once for all, if that be possible, such senseless chatter as that to which we are regaled by some writers. The passage reads thus:

"With this I am at the conclusion and pronounce my sentence. I condemn Christianity, I bring against the Christian Church the most terrible of all accusa-

tions. . . . It is to me the greatest of all imaginable corruptions. . . . The Christian Church has left nothing untouched with its depravity, it has made a worthlessness out of every value, a lie out of every truth, a baseness of soul out of every straightforwardness.

"This eternal accusation of Christianity, I shall write on all walls, wherever there are walls,—I have letters for even making the blind see. . . . I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct of revenge for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, *mean*,—I call it the one immortal blemish of mankind" (74, XI, pp. 349-351).

I have sought to do justice to my subject and yet to spare the reader much that is inexpressibly coarse, vulgar, blasphemous, and occasionally, though rarely—to Nietzsche's credit be it said—obscene. If some one should wish to see to what lengths Nietzsche was capable of going let him read the *Eselsfest* scene in *Zarathustra* and the four lines under the heading *The New Testament*. These latter are only a degree less grossly cynical than Heine at his worst as, for instance, in a verse of his on the madonna which in its profanity out-Nietzsche's Nietzsche.

So radical are Nietzsche's ideas on sympathy and pity and so great a rôle do they play in his thought that the subject merits separate treatment. In Schopenhauer's ethics which he bases on his metaphysics, the idea of pity is of cardinal importance. Knowing Wagner's relation to Schopenhauer we are not surprised to find this affection playing no small part in the master's music-dramas. Little wonder then that Nietzsche, dominated as he was in his early years by these two geniuses, should think well of a feeling whose function is so magnified by his teachers. "One cannot be happy," he says somewhere, "so long as everything about us is suffering." Speaking of his war experiences Frau Förster-Nietzsche says: "What the sympathetic heart of my brother suffered at that time cannot be expressed; months after he still heard the groans and agonized cries of the poor wounded. During the first year it was practically impossible for him to speak about these happenings" (28, II, p. 682).

How is it possible that his later attitude should become such a negative one? The reason is at hand. "Where lie your greatest dangers?" Nietzsche asks in his *Gay Science*. "In commiseration," is the answer (73, V, p. 205). The biography clearly shows that Nietzsche was hyper-sensitive. He was practical psychologist enough to

realize this, and that his maladies tended to intensify such a condition. So he reacts. When in suffering, he says, "We make a desperate stand against any pessimism lest it might appear as a consequence of our condition, and humiliate us as conquered ones" (*Dawn of Day*, p. 110). That he combatted excessive sensitivity as a weakness was wise, but in reacting he did not guard against going to the opposite extreme. His quarrel with Wagner may also have induced him to over-emphasize a difference of opinion. Then Nietzsche was an arch-sensationalist. He was inordinately fond of extremes, of saying what others never yet dared to utter.

"'Muthwillig ist sein Thun, muthwillig all sein Sinnen,
Und Ausgelassenheit sein End und sein Beginnen,'"

was said of Goethe by a countryman of Brandes (9, p. 9). However ill they may apply to the greatest of German poets these lines describe Nietzsche exactly. But in addition to these factors there was another that determined Nietzsche's relation to pity which has already been mentioned incidentally and will be referred to again a little farther on. His later thought on this matter was, as is usual with Nietzsche, not original with him though he may claim the questionable distinction of having phrased it with unparalleled brutality. Familiar as he was with the classics Nietzsche can hardly have been ignorant of the position assumed toward pity by certain of the Greek thinkers and their schools. Plato would not admit the poet into his ideal republic because the poet betrays us into sympathies that are not befitting a man (84, Bk. X). Aristotle, on the other hand, held that it is not desirable to starve these emotions but that we should regulate them. This is his idea of *katharsis*, the purging of fear and pity, emotions found in the hearts of all men, by means of tragedy and certain forms of music. These arts awaken the feelings in question and thus we may rid ourselves of emotions which by "Aristotle are reckoned among τὰ λυποῖντα. Each of them is, according to the definition in the *Rhetoric*, a form of pain" (12, p. 237). For Aristotle's idea of *katharsis* see chap. vi). By this homœopathic treatment we return to our normal condition. Hence the stage provides an innocent outlet for certain instincts that must be satisfied yet whose indulgence in actual life is fraught with danger. In the same way, speaking of the musical *katharsis*, Aristotle tells us that all who experience it are to some degree purified, lightened, and delighted (1, Bk. VIII, 7).

The Cynics, self-centered as they were and with their insensibility to the brotherhood of man, cannot have had much use for the nobler emotions. No cynic has. The Epicureans and the Stoics alike in their endeavor to get away from the carking cares of this world, in their quest for the imperturbability of mind which constituted their haven of rest,—must needs undervalue sympathy as did the Epicureans, or abhor it altogether as did the Stoics. Every emotion being damnable in the eyes of an orthodox Stoic pity must go overboard with the other ballast. That is why Epictetus speaks in his *Discourses* (Bk. III, chap. xxiv), with such fine scorn of those who “sit down in a flutter,” because of the vicissitudes of life.

Seneca, another Stoic, in his dialogue on *Clemency* (Bk. II, chap. v), brandmarks pity as a mental disease incident to those who cannot bear the sight of suffering. In his day as in ours there were those who, touched by the tears of criminals would, if they could, set them at liberty. Seneca objects to pity because it considers only a man's present plight, forgetting the cause to which it is due. Since pity is a disorder of the mind, according to Seneca, and since the wise man cannot be affected by any disorder, therefore he cannot be touched by pity.

But we need not hark back to the Stoics to find similar ideas expressed even more forcibly by one with whom Nietzsche must have been more or less familiar, namely, Spinoza. His name one meets again and again in Nietzsche's books. In the foreword to the *Genealogy of Morals*, Spinoza's name is mentioned as one of those who are “of common opinion in this one point: in the underestimation of sympathy” (74, X, p. 8). Now in the fiftieth proposition of the fourth part of his *Ethic* Spinoza says:

“Pity in a man who lives according to the guidance of reason is in itself evil and unprofitable. . . . Pity is sorrow, and therefore is in itself evil. . . . Hence it follows that a man who lives according to the dictates of reason endeavors as much as possible to prevent himself from being touched by pity.”

Bernard Mandeville, a Dutch physician who settled in London, in his *Fable of the Bees*—a book that Nietzsche may or may not have known—declares that pity is a fault and one of which the weakest minds have the greatest share (65, p. 42). For Montaigne—a favorite with Nietzsche—too, pity is a weakness to which especially women,

children, and the vulgar are disposed. He endorses the Stoic idea to succor the afflicted but not to sympathize with them (71, chap. 1). Charron, influenced by Montaigne, deems pity effeminate (13, Bk. I, chap. 24). La Rochefoucauld—another of Nietzsche's favorite authors—with thorough going cynicism writes above his *Réflexions* (Tom. 1, *Maxime* 264), the motto that our virtues ordinarily are nothing but our vices disguised. Naturally he sees in pity nothing but love of self. We help others trusting to be aided in turn when our day of affliction comes. Properly speaking kindnesses rendered are nothing more than kindnesses to ourselves in advance. Coming to Kant it is not difficult to predict what his views in this connection must be if one knows the rigor of his moral system. There are a number of passages in which his disapprobation of *Mitleiden* is manifest. He speaks approvingly of the Stoic sage who seeing that his friend cannot be saved says calmly: "What is it to me?" *i. e.*, he repudiated pity (55). And Kant goes on to say that if I permit myself to suffer at sight of another's woe there will then be two sufferers. Yet it is impossible that it should be our duty to add to the suffering of the world, for which reason it is evident that it cannot be right to do well out of compassion (55). Fichte like Kant calls only those actions moral that are determined by the will. He who pities is not performing a moral act. Indeed, the more instinctive his pity is the less moral will it be (26, p. 199).

Just as Schopenhauer's glorification of pity is the outgrowth of his metaphysics, so the depreciation of it by Spinoza and Kant, not to mention the others, is in harmony with their philosophy taken as a whole. The same is true of Nietzsche. Nietzsche is overwhelmed by his ideal of the overman. The overman must be attained and that as soon as possible. Everything that retards the coming of his ideal must be unhesitatingly thrown overboard. Well then, what about the halt and the blind, the deaf and the dumb, the weak and the diseased, what about all these imbeciles and madly insane; are they not the greatest obstacles that delay the coming of the millenium? Why have they not long since been relentlessly swept from the surface of the earth? Why not? Because of pity—that greatest of all brakes on the wheels of progress.

Oh yes, Nietzsche speaks of pity, but it is a higher pity, one that opposes itself to that which ordinarily passes as such. Others would do away with suffering. He would rather magnify it (73, VII, p.

180). "Ye say unto me," says Zarathustra, "'life is hard to bear' but for what purpose have ye in the morning your pride and in the evening your submission?" "Be it a God's, be it men's pity: pity is contrary unto shame" (73, VII, pp. 49, 385).

Sympathy, according to Nietzsche, is antithetical to those passions that invigorate the feeling of life. It lowers vitality. Suffering itself is enervating but sympathy multiplies its depressing effect. But that is not the worst feature of sympathy. What makes it so exceedingly reprehensible is that it thwarts the law of selection. It preserves the moribund and gives life a gloomy aspect by thus maintaining what is ripe for extinction. It is precisely because Schopenhauer was hostile to life that he lauds sympathy as a virtue whereas, in reality, it multiplies misery and advances decadence.

There is one other point that calls for discussion here. Nietzsche's last period is commonly thought of as his optimistic period. You will recall that I have asserted from the beginning that the term is a misnomer. Following Hollitscher I called him a pessimistic idealist and such, I fancy, I have proved him to be during his first two periods. What about his latter days? If he was not an optimist why is he said to be one? Unless I am in error what has misled people is Nietzsche's positive attitude towards life. Ask him, is life worth living? and the answer comes, yes. Well, then he must be an optimist. Now, in the first place, I would deny that it is safe to declare a man either an optimist or a pessimist upon a bare affirmative or negative reply to the question proposed. But the one fact that leads me to sincerely believe that writers on Nietzsche have jumped to a conclusion which the facts do not warrant is that Nietzsche's affirmation of life is far too impulsive, even for Nietzsche, his language much too overwrought, his very violence such that it suggests to me that Nietzsche's attitude towards life is artificial, is not so much the result of the desire to live, as of the will to live. Did not his "wild wisdom" tell him: "'Thou wildest, thou desirest, thou lovest; therefore only thou *praisest* life!'" (74, VIII, p. 151).

But granted for a moment that Nietzsche's protestations ring true, even so he is not an optimist as I defined that word on an earlier page. Taking his words at their face value all we can say of Nietzsche is that during his last period he affirms life, affirms it emphatically.

But why? Because this world is a good world? Not at all. He does not differ from Schopenhauer in denying the misery of existence. He refuses to negate life merely because he wills to live. I can imagine Nietzsche saying that even were the world a thousand times worse than it is, even yet he would will to live. He tells us that one who like himself has sought to think pessimism "in die Tiefe," and to release it from Schopenhauerian bonds, has, in all probability, just on that account and without his own volition, opened his eyes to the opposite of this pessimism: the ideal of the most wanton, the most world affirming man who has not only reconciled himself to what was and is, but who wants to live it all over again as it was and is into all eternity, incessantly shouting *da capo* (73, VII, p. 80). In spite of his brave front Nietzsche was essentially a weak man. And he knew it. Hence his love of the Titanic. Does he not himself tell us somewhere: "There are free, bold spirits who fain would conceal and deny that their proud hearts are hopelessly broken?" (102, p. 26). In the words of Nietzsche's friend and colleague, Professor Overbeck, "the optimism of Nietzsche is that of the desperado" (7, p. 288).

Had writers on Nietzsche not been blinded by his will to live, how could they have called him an optimist when he says of such a basal thing as truth: "It is nothing but a moral preconception that truth is worth more than appearance" (73, VII, pp. 53, 62). "These spirits," he says, speaking of a certain class of men, "are yet far from being free spirits. *For they still believe in truth*" (74, X, p. 209).

It is as if one hears Max Stirner saying;

"So long as you believe in truth you believe not in yourself and you are a—*menial, a—religious man*. You alone are truth, or rather, you are much more than truth. . . . All truth beneath me I value; a truth *above* me, a truth according to which I must *direct* myself, I know not. For me there is no truth for above me there is nothing" (74, X, pp. 365, 366).

Nietzsche likes the phrase, "naught is true, all is permitted." In his *Im Süden* he sings:

"Im Norden—ich gesteh's mit Zaudern—
Liebt ich ein Weibchen, alt zum schaudern:
'Die Wahrheit' hiess diess alte Weib" (73, V, p. 352).

Not only is he pessimistic as regards truth—concerning which Augustine (that great philosopher in the old Greek sense of the word)

cries out: "O Truth, Truth, how the very marrow of my soul sighs after thee!" but it is so in other things (2, Bk 3, Chap. 6). When he takes Wagner to task he wants it understood that he does not consider Wagner inferior to other artists; compared with Wagner other musicians are nothing. "Things are bad everywhere. The decay is universal" (74, XI, p. 49). Nor does he limit himself to music. Speaking of the sterility of the nineteenth century he asserts: "I have not come across a single man who has really brought a new ideal. . . .

Apparently all is decadence" (73, XII, p. 201).

"Humanity!" he cries. "Was there ever a more hideous old hag among all old women? (—unless it were truth: a question for philosophers). No, we do not love humanity" (73, V, p. 306).

That a man who does not love humanity should not love woman is not surprising, for it is axiomatic that the whole embraces its parts. Nietzsche is a true Schopenhauerian in his depreciation of the sex. He was quite right when he said: "One cannot think highly enough of women: but one need not therefore think falsely of them (73, XIV, p. 235). Sane remarks such as that just quoted are rare, but one could readily multiply passages such as these which follow:

"We think woman deep—why? because we never find any bottom in her. Woman is not even shallow" (74, XI, p. 101).

"Supposing she loved me (namely woman) what a nuisance she would become to me in the long run! And suppose she did not love me, how much more of a nuisance she would be to me in the long run! . . . It is a matter of two different sorts of nuisances; therefore let us marry" (*Dawn of Day*, p. 289).

"Some men have sighed because of the abduction of their wives. The majority because nobody would abduct them" (73, II, p. 303).

"Every association that does not elevate degrades and *vice versa*. Consequently when men take wives they generally fall a little, whereas the wives are somewhat elevated" (73, II, p. 304).]

And Zarathustra says:

"Two things are wanted by the true man: danger and play. Therefore he seeketh woman as the most dangerous toy."

"Man shall be educated for war, and woman for the recreation of the warrior. Everything else is folly."

"Over-sweet fruits—the warrior liketh not. Therefore he liketh woman; bitter is even the sweetest woman" (74, VIII, p. 88).

Nietzsche's contempt of woman follows naturally from his *Herren-*

moral, his overman ideas, and his worship of all that is Greek. But we should not do him justice if we did not point out that his most poisonous arrows are directed against the "new woman," the woman who wants the suffrage, who wants to be anything but a woman. At best, thinks Nietzsche, there is so much about woman that is pedantic, superficial, *Schulmeisterlich*, so much that is little, but woe the day when she loses her fear of man and when her eternal prosiness, with which she is so richly endowed, should dare to manifest itself.

I must dwell no longer on these matters. It is not necessary, for it seems to me you will concede that my point is proved. Nietzsche is not an optimist, not even in his third period—I should almost say never less than in his third period. Theoretically he may not be but temperamentally he certainly is a thoroughgoing pessimist. In closing my chapter on his transition stage I asked: "Could you conjure up a world much worse than that pictured in Nietzsche's *Menschliches Allzumenschliches?*" Yes, I am sure you can if you think of the world of Nietzsche's last period. Everything is wrong. There is no truth; art is on its deathbed; our system of morals leads us to annihilation instead of to the overman; Christianity, the worst of all religions, rules the world; in a word—everything is décadent.

And yet Nietzsche is decidedly no longer a Schopenhauerian pessimist for on the horizon he sees the dawn of day. Daybreak is at hand. The overman is coming; and this overman, who is the very foundation of Nietzsche's latter-day philosophy, proves beyond a doubt that Nietzsche was not only during his first, nor only during his second period, but that from the *Birth of Tragedy* to the very *Antichrist* itself he was neither more nor less than a pessimistic idealist.

As one passes in mental review the facts of Nietzsche's life, the nature of his philosophy, the peculiarities of his character and temperament, one is inclined to the conclusion that with all his modernity Nietzsche in some respects lived several centuries too late. He never felt at ease among us and that because essentially his was a Renaissance type of mind. At first blush it may seem absurd to carry Nietzsche back some four or five centuries, but let us see. According to modern historians the most outstanding thing about the Renaissance is not the Revival of Learning however important an element it may be, but the discovery, better said the rediscovery, of man (see 11, p. 308).

The Renaissance pushed man himself to the front, made him the focus of all thought and of all endeavor; the very thing Nietzsche is constantly doing. Raise man to the overman is his slogan, his gospel. Not the cosmos was his chief concern but the microcosmus. For Nietzsche as for the Renaissance man is the beginning, the end, the measure of all things. Man is the heart of the universe.

According to Wundt (105, I, p. 371), this period of new birth was dominated by two ideas, one directed outward the other inward, disparate you see yet supplementing each other. On the one hand overcome with wonder by the wide expanse their vision rapidly acquired as new worlds, in more senses than one, were laid open before their gaze, men came to a point where nothing seemed too marvellous to conceive, nothing too marvellous to believe. Something very much like this we find in the sweep of Nietzsche's imagination as he conjures up before us species beyond species. Nor does the parallel fail when we compare Nietzsche's conception of things with the second controlling idea attributed by Wundt to the Renaissance—the idea that by its own *lux naturalis* the microcosm relates itself to the macrocosm.

Another characteristic of the Renaissance is that the period was too rich in ideas to develop a systematic view of the world (105, p. 371). Could anything be more true of Nietzsche? We have seen how legions of ideas trooped through his mind, ideas just and unjust, rational and irrational, harmonious and discordant, all of which Nietzsche scattered about with spendthrift hand, recking little whether or not they could be combined into any well-ordered whole.

The manner, too, in which not a few writers of the period in question speak of things good and holy, so esteemed at least by many, comes to the surface again in Nietzsche. There was a sort of over-individuation that reminds one of Nietzsche's *Herrenmoral*. There was a revaluation of all values, there were masters and there were slaves with, only too often, morals to match.

Finally, if the interest in classical learning is by no means all there is to the Renaissance it unquestionably is one of its most challenging features. This devotion to the classics was markedly developed in Nietzsche. We have seen how from his youth his thoughts ever turned to Greece and things Greek. His idea of culture if not wholly that of the humanists at least bases itself on their ideals.

In a word, Nietzsche beyond a doubt belongs in the *milieu* of the

Renaissance. His homocentrism, his individualism, his enthusiasm, his devotion to the humanities, his manner, the fertility of his genius, all combine to make him one of the corypheai of the Renaissance who appears on the stage just as the curtain is apparently about to fall. Indeed, he has been called "the last of the humanists" (93, p. 1), the *Vollender* of the Renaissance. The Renaissance proper, we are told, liberated man only from his scientific, industrial, and religious bondage, but he did not break away from a system of ethics in which man instead of being central is at the periphery. Thus far, it is asserted, men have been moral not for their own sake but for morality's sake. In reevaluating all values and in assigning man his proper place Nietzsche is declared to have performed an immortal service to mankind (38, p. 597).

This is going too far. Who shall say that we have definitively passed into a new epoch? Pater said of Winckelmann that "he is the last fruit of the Renaissance" (80, p. xvi). Yet while Nietzsche belongs to the nineteenth Winckelmann was of the eighteenth century. In short, to pronounce Nietzsche the consummator of the Renaissance is as rash as it is safe to classify him in that period.

VI. *Critique.*

Such is Nietzsche's philosophy. And what now is its significance? There are many answers. Some would have us believe that its import is *nil*, which is impossible; or that it is an unmixed evil, which is improbable. Others profess to see in it a new gospel. Who are right?

This fundamental disagreement appears as soon as we inquire into the value of Nietzsche's very first book, his *Birth of Tragedy*. Seillière, who may very properly represent one of the parties at issue, declares that this monument of sterile ingenuity would long since have passed into the limbo of eternal oblivion but for the reputation acquired by Nietzsche with his other writings (95, p. 12). Drews, representing the denizens of the other pole, just as emphatically pronounces the book nothing less than marvellous (19, pp. 63-68). Who is right? To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence in favor of Nietzsche's theory of the origin of tragedy that can actually pass muster. His ideas undoubtedly are based much more on Schopenhauer's metaphysics than

on philological or historical research. Drews admits that the fundamental significance which Nietzsche ascribes to music in Greek culture is not a matter of history, nor does Drews deny that in matters of detail Nietzsche may be wholly at sea. What he maintains is that Nietzsche has given us a wholly new view of Greek culture and that he cannot be lauded too highly for being the first to reveal the inner psychological connection between the culture of Dionysos and the drama of the Greeks. If Nietzsche does not demonstrate he divines just why the Greek drama must be tragic.

Who is right Seillière or Drews? Your reply depends upon whether you belong to the one or to the other of James's types. If you are "tough-minded" you will probably reason somewhat as follows: Here is a man with a new theory about the origin of tragedy. Let us have the facts upon which he bases his theory. What, there are none? Nothing but sheer conjecture? Have we then not yet had enough philosophical speculation as to the origin of things ever since Thales to convince man that it never has and never will bring us one step farther? —in other words you will have absolutely no use for Nietzsche's book.

But if you are "tender-minded" you will say with Drews that though Nietzsche's solutions solve nothing, though he be entirely wrong in his assumptions, he still deserves credit for having raised new questions and for having made new answers possible.

This much can hardly be denied, namely, that the *Birth of Tragedy*, apart from any intrinsic value it may or may not have, is an unusually interesting and stimulating book, full from cover to cover with the enthusiasm of youth.

Of Nietzsche's *Inopportune Reflections* that against Strauss was called forth by the latter's *Old and New Faith*. It is a fair question whether Strauss's book is not infected with that superficial optimism of which Nietzsche complains, yet whatever truth the latter's essay may contain is expressed in a sensational way and buried under an overwhelming mass of distorted views. The value of Nietzsche's *Reflections* on Schopenhauer and Wagner considered from a critical standpoint is naught. In vain do you search these books for a reliable exposition of the philosophic or dramatic ideas and ideals of the men with whom they deal. Psychologically the essays are both interesting and important for Nietzsche reads much into Schopenhauer and Wagner that

is peculiar to neither but highly characteristic of himself. Nietzsche's Schopenhauer is not the real Schopenhauer but merely Nietzsche's conception of the "tragic philosopher" just as his Wagner is nowhere the real Wagner but Nietzsche's mental image of the Dionysian artist. Of all his *Reflections* Nietzsche's essay on history though open to much criticism is by far the most valuable. With all the exaggerations that one must expect from Nietzsche it contains, none the less, matters worthy of serious consideration. Whether or not you like Nietzsche's substitution of *vivo ergo cogito* for Descartes's *cogito ergo sum* it will not harm us to be told once more that education should be for life. Unquestionably Nietzsche is right in his contention that too often history teaching and study degenerate into mere hero-worship or antiquarian research instead of making out of us better men and women. Is there not a point, too, to Nietzsche's assertion that there is danger in forever expatiating on the greatness of the past? Of course, our young people should learn to reverence what was great and noble in days gone by but we must guard them against the belief that they are mere epigoni. Reverence for what has gone before should be not of a depressing nature but should stimulate to higher ideals, should make our youth not mere *Nachkommen* but worthy fathers and mothers of the future.

We may say, then, that of all his periods Nietzsche's first is by far the most sane, the most interesting, the most suggestive, and the most contentful. There is much to criticise, but the *Birth of Tragedy* at the very least is certainly suggestive, the essay on Strauss and the lectures on the *Bildungsanstalten* contain at least a grain of truth just as the essay on history has a core that affords food for thought. Considered apart from his personality the least valuable of the writings of this epoch are the *Reflections* on Schopenhauer and Wagner.

Interesting as Nietzsche's first period is his reputation as a philosopher rests chiefly on his later thought. Before turning to this it may be well to inquire as to what Nietzsche's own opinion is of the character and duties of the true philosopher. He expresses this in language so striking that I do not venture a translation but submit it as he wrote it:

"Ein Philosoph: das ist ein Mensch, der beständig ausserordentliche Dinge erlebt, sieht, hört, argwöhnt, hofft, träumt; der von seinen eigenen Gedanken wie von aussen her, wie von oben und unter her, als von seiner Art Ereignessen und

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Blitzschlägen getroffen wird; der selbst vielleicht ein Gewitter ist, welches mit neuen Blitzen schwanger geht; ein verhängnisvoller Mensch, um den herum es immer grollt und brummt und klafft und unheimlich zugeht. Ein Philosoph: ach, ein Wesen, das oft vor sich davonläuft, oft vor sich Furcht hat, aber zu neugierig ist, um nicht immer wieder zu sich zu kommen" (73, VII, p. 269).

A magnificent bit of German whose onomatopeic force must impress even those unfamiliar with the language.

The genuine philosophers according to Nietzsche are imperious. They are creators. They say: "Thus shall it be." Many generations must have prepared the way for the existence of the philosopher. Each one of his virtues must have been won one by one, then nurtured and transmitted down the line. When at length a philosopher is born we have a man who willingly shoulders great responsibility. He has nothing in common with the masses of men. He finds himself in conflict with them for his invariable enemy is the ideal of the day. Hence the philosophers are the evil conscience of their time. They vivisect the virtues of their day only to find that many of them are outlived. Thus nothing is so characteristic of the present century as weakness of will and consequently the true philosopher emphasizes strength of will (73, VII, p. 161 ff.).

It is easy to recognize in all this an attempt at self-portrayal. Nietzsche never suffered from an excess of modesty but like Walt Whitman celebrates himself and sings himself. Such crass egotism as his scarcely finds a parallel in the history of the world. Writing to Brandes under date of April 10, 1888, Nietzsche enclosed a *vita* which begins with the inevitable reference to his descent from the Polish nobility and even informs the Danish critic that at one time his (Nietzsche's) pulse-beat had a rate corresponding precisely to that of the first Napoleon. Indeed, this letter must be read to be appreciated (9, p. 138). Nietzsche took particular pride in his books and his style. "My ambition," he writes, "is to say in ten sentences what every one else says in a book—what every one else does *not* say in a book" (74, XI, p. 218). "I flatter myself," he says in a letter to Rhode, "to have brought the German language to its perfection in this Zarathustra" (28, II, p. 474). He does not hesitate to say: "I have given to the Germans the profoundest books they at all possess—a sufficient reason why they should not understand a word of them" (74, XI, p. 49). Nor did he lack confidence in his mission as philosopher. Her-

aclitus, Empedocles, Spinoza, Goethe, he calls his forefathers (74, XII, p. 208). Elsewhere he says: "In dem, wass Zarathustra, Moses, Muhammed, Jesus, Plato, Brutus, Spinoza, Mirabeau [permit me to call attention parenthetically to the marvellous combination of proper nouns in this sentence], bewegte, lebe ich auch schon und in manchen Dingen kommt in mir erst reif ans Tageslicht was embryonisch ein paar Jahrtausende brauchte" (76, p. 168). "Ye look upward," he tells us, "when longing to be exalted. And I look downward because I am exalted" (74, VIII, p. 49). Thus spake Zarathustra.

One is tempted to ask Nietzsche:

"Art thou the first man that was born?
Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?
Hast thou heard the secret counsel of God?
And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?
What knowest thou, that we know not?
What understandest thou, which is not in us?" (Job 15:7, 8, 9.)

Thus spake Eliphaz the Temanite.

"Alas," one might exclaim in the words of Nietzsche, "that mankind have had to take seriously the delirium of sick cobweb spinners" (74, XI, p. 117). Nietzsche was a man who had the least possible connection with life. He never married, and, though a scholar by profession, spent most of his life without any duties. People are wont to ask whether a philosopher has really lived as he taught. Preaching is easy, practice hard. Such a question, Nietzsche would answer, reveals *naïveté*. How else can one attain knowledge if one has not dwelt in the country of which one speaks? That sounds well but what are the facts? Is the Nietzsche who roars and rages through the pages of his books a typical blond beast among men? His friends do not weary telling us what a gentleman Nietzsche was, how courteous, how tender, how anything but a ferocious leader of a "flaxen-haired herd of robber-beasts" (73, XIII, p. 116). Nietzsche was forever at odds with himself. It will not do to say that inconsistency is a natural accompaniment of development. We all know that, but in Nietzsche the changes are too rapid, too extreme, the disharmony is too great. Even though they do not completely obscure his fundamental ideas the endless contradictions are none the less galling to the normal mind. Thus in his first period he tells us that the aesthetic is the most basal thing in life but later says: I was wrong, it is science, and still

later declares that nothing is fundamental but the question of morals ; during his first period he informs us with all possible emphasis that probably there never before was so great a philosopher as Schopenhauer nor so grand an artist as Wagner, but a little later he faces about and protests that Schopenhauer never lost the trail because he never was on it, and as for Wagner, probably such bad music was never written before.

But this is not all. In Nietzsche we have a man who in his solipsism loses sight of all proportions. For him Socrates is a "rat-catcher of Athens" (73, V, 264) ; Plato is a "decadent in style," "tiresome," "pre-existently Christian," one whose philosophy is "superior cheating" (74, XI, 221) ; Descartes is "superficial" (73, VII, 122) ; the "old" Kant is an "insignificant psychologist," "moral fanatic," "not in the least original" (73, XV, 47) ; his is a "back-door philosophy," and he is "the most deformed conceptual cripple that has ever existed" (74, XI, 175, 160) ; "Hegel, Schopenhauer, Spinoza ! what poverty, what one-sidedness" (73, XIII, 8) ! Darwin, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, are "mediocre Englishmen ;" Mill, that keen intellect, is for Nietzsche an "offensive transparency," a sort of yellow-back novel (74, XI, 161) ; Carlyle is an "abgeschmackte Wirrkopf" (73, VII, 221) ; and, finally, to enumerate no more, Spencer's system is "Krämer-Philosophie" (73, XV, 441).

If we took time to work through the history of philosophy since Socrates, eliminating all those thinkers discounted by Nietzsche, we would have left few others than himself. He thought that he was one of those spirits who bring us tidings of things and events far beyond our ken. He believed himself a forerunner of the dawn, the first bold shaft of light which, piercing the dense clouds of ignorance and prejudice, heralds the coming day. He deemed himself the most original of men and wrote :

"Ich wohne in meinem eignen Haus,
Hab niemanden nie nichts nachgemacht,
Und lachte noch jeden Meister aus,
Der nicht sich selber—ausgelacht" (73, XII, p. 194).

It need not be said that all who have sworn him fealty echo Nietzsche here as ever, but I was much surprised to find Robertson saying in his *History of German Literature* that Nietzsche was "the

most original thinker in the last period of German intellectual evolution" (90, p. 611). Robertson could hardly be further beside the mark. The most original literary composer Nietzsche indisputably was, but as a writer, as a thinker, he does little more than echo, as I have shown and will show, voices of to-day and of yesterday. Nietzsche's much vaunted originality is practically confined to his style.

Nietzsche's literary gifts are of a high order, yet here as always with him unqualified praise would be misplaced. Orage, in his rather sensational little book, says of Nietzsche that "there is no trace of bombast, . . . nothing diffuse or turgid in his style" (77, p. 14). How anybody who has really read Nietzsche can speak thus is beyond me. You need not wade through Nietzsche's many volumes, simply turn to *Zarathustra* and see if there is not much bombast. Not only is Nietzsche often grandiose but turgid as well. Too often a mere cataract of words must hide from view a pitiful poverty of thought. This much said I gladly add my tribute of profound respect and sincere admiration for Nietzsche's remarkable abilities as a literary craftsman. No translation can begin to do him justice, and that although the German language does not lend itself very well to Nietzsche's purpose. Not only does his style evince dynamic range and feeling for rhythm, but there is a wealth of imagery and a certain sensuous beauty that captivates and holds the attention of even a cursory reader. This is true especially of *Zarathustra*. Striking parables such as his "children's land," a land undiscovered in the remotest sea, for which Nietzsche bids us set our sails to seek and seek, and scattered lyrical passages that haunt one's memory are not lacking. It is true, moreover, that although Nietzsche constantly surrenders himself to his unchained emotions and is forever goading himself to make each aphorism more irresistible than its predecessor, nevertheless, he can on occasion write a paragraph truly restful in its mood. Such a passage is the gentle pastoral scene entitled *Et in Arcadia ego* (73, III, p. 354). But, granting these exceptions, we may say that on the whole there are few half-tints in Nietzsche; nor need this surprise us. "Of all that is written I love only that which the writer wrote with his blood," says Zarathustra (74, VIII, p. 48). This being so need we marvel that the colors are nearly all hot, the shadows nearly all dark; that the clouds are rarely iridescent but

often pregnant with omens and portents of the overman, the eternal recurrence, the immediate, or the distant future? "Too heavily charged was my cloud," exclaims Zarathustra, "between the daughters of lightnings I will throw hail-showers into the depths. Powerfully my breast will heave, powerfully it will blow its storm blast over the mountains: thus it will relieve itself. Verily, like a storm my happiness and my freedom came." Spring-time zephyrs you see are rare with Nietzsche. Autumnal hurricanes prevail. "Verily, a strong wind is Zarathustra," announces the prophet; then, slightly changing the metaphor, he continues: "Saw ye never a sail go over the sea, rounded and blown up and trembling with the violence of the wind? Like that sail, trembling with the violence of the spirit, my wisdom goeth over the sea" (74, VIII, pp. 135-145). "Why so frenzied, Zarathustra?" you ask. Because, he answers, "too slowly all speech runneth for me. Into thy chariot, O storm, I leap. And even thee will I scourge with my malignity" (74, VIII, p. 113). Thus we find no calm contemplation, there is no time for it, there is only passion, vehemence, rapture, rage, all riding on avalanches of thought piled Ossa upon Pelion, for he must climb higher and higher until eventually, he, Nietzsche himself, becomes the first of the overmen. Hence he is apocalyptic, stirred by dreams and visions reading which we hear mighty thunderings and see powerful word-paintings dashed off by an excessive imagination. Only such an imagination could paint so vivid but also so loathsome a scene as that of the young man and the serpent delineated in *Zarathustra* (74, VIII, p. 228). And how rapid his changes from pathos to bathos, from the sublime to burlesque so vulgar that the veriest hack-writer would blush to admit it his own.

Nietzsche is out of joint with the world. He defies the world. If the consensus of opinion is that certain men are entitled to a prominent place in the history of philosophy that is all the more reason why Nietzsche should disenthrone them. And this intrepid judge, who does not hesitate to weigh the mightiest intellects of all time only to hurl them aside as so much chaff, this prescient genius who writes books that no man can open, but that abide interpretation until the overman comes, surely, he will set us a noble example that will incarnate and symbolize for us those teachings which we poor every day herd-animals can but faintly comprehend? Alack, his preaching and

his practice not only do not run parallel, they run counter. And must one refute such a man's philosophy? Is he himself not its best refutation?

It is not part of my plan to consider one by one all of Nietzsche's wild assertions. That would be asking too much. Yet I shall endeavor to weigh impartially, if I can, those ideas of his in which we are most concerned. Before doing so, let us have clearly in mind what Nietzsche's fundamental notions are. About these we can in our criticism group those not quite so vital.

We have seen that Nietzsche began active life as a Schopenhauerian. Schopenhauer believed that the world is the worst possible world that can exist. So did Nietzsche. But very soon he differentiates from his master. He begins to believe that however bad everything may be to-day better things are possible in the future. Thus is born the will to power. You see at once the radical difference between the two men. Schopenhauer is paralyzed, Nietzsche galvanized by his pessimism. But what is this future? The future of the overman. And who is the overman? The being who will result if we once again permit nature's law of natural selection, with which we are now constantly interfering, to operate freely. Hence naturally, necessarily, and consistently, Nietzsche becomes an outspoken enemy of pity, and since Christianity teaches pity, of Christianity. Obviously, one cannot put Nietzsche's many-sided philosophy into a single paragraph; but, if I mistake not, this is its heart and soul, its innermost core.

Let us begin by considering Nietzsche's will to power. It is his open sesame. It solves every riddle. This will to power is the most basal thing in life. Your love for those whom you hold most dear, for instance, is nothing but one manifestation of this key to the universe. Love is wholly and solely the desire to dominate the person whom we love. In a word, the will to power is the universal instinct for domination subject to no categorical imperative as was the will of Kant but standing its own master beyond good and evil. Ibsen's Brand expresses Nietzsche's thought exactly when he says:

"It is Will alone that matters
Will alone that mars or makes,
Will, that no distraction scatters,
And that no resistance breaks." (Act II.)

Critically considered he who runs may read that Nietzsche's will to

power is a mere outgrowth of Schopenhauer's will to live. Evidently Nietzsche thought he had hit upon something more fundamental than his whilom master, yet is not the will to power comprehended in the will to live? Is not life the first essential upon which any and every will to power must ground itself? Whatever one may say to this both principles are mere abstractions. We can know them only by their manifestations. To say that the will to power is the desire for domination brings us no further. The one is as abstract as the other. If you strike me down and subdue me that is one form of dominion. If I worst you in an argument we have another form. If a third controls both by love we have still another form. Mastery is not always a matter of force. Just here Nietzsche goes astray. He knows better and yet essentially his idea of the will to power is that of physical domination. That is why his heroes are Cæsar, Borgia, Napoleon. That is why Nietzsche could not understand Jesus. And yet, as somebody has well said, if Cæsar conquered Gaul and Napoleon conquered Europe, Jesus conquered the world. Doubtless Nietzsche knew it all the time but he never fully realized that the will to power is protean in its manifestations.

There is another point. If the will to power is the matrix out of which all that is developed, then, logically, the universe represents only so many developmental forms of this unitary principle. There must then be back and beyond the phenomenal world as we know it a noumenal world, a *Welt an sich*. All unconsciously Nietzsche therefore leads us back to Kant's *Ding an sich*, a conception in complete dissonance with Nietzsche's ideas of becoming as opposed to any fixed absolute reality. It is apparent that we have here another instance of Nietzsche's great difficulty—his failure to articulate his underlying ideas.

Conjuring with his will to power Nietzsche tries to show us how it will bring us to the overman. Our consideration of the overman need not detain us long. If the theories of evolution are wrong then Nietzsche's ideal creation is merely a bit of vain speculation. If right, Fiske may be correct when he argues that "on earth there will never be a higher creature than man" (27, Chap. III), in which case Nietzsche's overman in the sense of a new species remains as much as ever a creature of fancy. But granted that Fiske is wrong, that almost indefinite development is possible in the future, even so it is not

difficult to show Nietzsche on his own ground that he argues mistakenly. We have seen that Nietzsche's idea of the overman is a being who is little more than a magnificent beast of prey. He may be compared to what anthropologists call quaternary or tertiary man. Hence Nietzsche's overman would be not a new type beyond man but a reversion to a primitive type. Saintsbury is quite right when he brandmarks Nietzsche's *Uebermensch* as an "*Unmensch*" for such he is (91, III, p. 584). He is nothing else than a return to what Hegel calls the state of nature, a state in which man is governed by his blind instincts. From Hegel's standpoint Nietzsche's overman is an atavism pure and simple. Or, looking at it from another point of view, Nietzsche's overman is a despot, and, as Guyau says, the despot ends in becoming a child. He yields to caprice and thus objective omnipotence ends in genuine subjective impotence (39, p. 103).

Even Nietzsche's enmity against pity finds no support among evolutionists in general. For them pity is as much a result of evolution as any of man's other emotions. Nietzsche's greatest mistake Guyau, for example would say, is that he forgets that our social as well as all our moral standards are themselves evolutional products. There is little quite so pretentious and at the same time quite so barren as Nietzsche's conception of the overman. He is a child of fancy, what one might call with Hauptmann,

"Ein Zwitter Ding, halb Tier, halb Gott,
Der Erde Ruhm, des Himmels Spott" (44, Act III).

At best he is an *ens rationis*, as the schoolmen would say, and that only for Nietzsche.

Yet suppose that in some idle moment you yourself were to allow your imagination to run riot, to construct an ideal man after your own heart, what sort of creature would he be? One who, like Nietzsche's overman, has many characteristics in common with Lombroso's degenerate? Hardly, the overman of your fancy and of mine would, indeed, be physically a superior being but that not in order to lord it over slaves, to ruthlessly massacre all who happen to cross his path, to make this world a waste and a desolation by his pitiless severity. By no manner of means. Nor will he ruin men by indiscriminate charity. On the contrary, he will have learned to pity aright and physical superiority will be only incidental to certain other qualities:

mental, moral, religious, that will cause him to tower head and shoulders above the memory of his puny progenitors.

Harmless as such day-dreams may be they become positively pernicious when we make them the standard by which we measure the man of to-day. Mr. Gilbert K. Chesterton in an essay on Bernard Shaw expresses this so truly and withal so picturesquely that I cannot but refer the reader to the passage. (14, p. 62.) If instead of reading Shaw you will read Nietzsche its applicability is at once apparent.

Cheek by jowl with Nietzsche's overman we find his doctrine of the eternal recurrence, an idea already hoary with age although Nietzsche promulgated it as something *funkelnagelneu*. Impressed by the constant decay and resurrection about them, the constant alternation of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, year after year and century after century, the Greeks scarcely could help but hit upon this recurrence notion if, indeed, they did not simply borrow it from still more ancient sources. Anaximander taught that all things return again and again to the womb of primary matter, to the unity of the original universal Being (35, II, p. 55). Heraclitus, too, believed in a world-cycle. Everything begins with and ends in fire only to repeat the process. This belief in the cyclical recurrence of things with almost mathematical precision was held likewise by the Pythagoreans if we may accept the remark truly *frappant* made by Eudemus—a pupil of Aristotle—whose familiarity with mathematics and astronomy facilitated a good understanding of Pythagorean doctrine. Gomperz reports Eudemus as saying: “‘If we are to believe the Pythagoreans I shall once more gossip among you with this little staff in my hand, and again as now will ye be sitting before me, and likewise will it be with all the rest’” (35, I, p. 140). The reader will recall an analogous passage in *Zarathustra* previously quoted. Empedocles was another Greek thinker who believed in the eternal repetition of things (35, I, p. 239). It is entirely in keeping with what we know of Empedocles when Hölderlin causes him to say:

“Geh! Fürchte nichts. Es kehret alles wieder,
Und was geschehen soll, ist schon vollendet.”¹

¹ *Der Tod des Empedokles*, lines 2231, 2232: Hölderlin was one of Nietzsche's favorites. It may be worthy of mention that Hölderlin, like Nietzsche, was the son of a clergyman and destined for the same career; like Nietzsche a lover of all

The later Stoics entertained notions similar to those of Empedocles (35, I, p. 145; also 106, III, part 1, pp. 154-156). Coming down to modern times we find that Heine believes that by virtue of the laws of eternal combination all forms that may have already existed shall appear again anew (45). So Blanqui declares that he shall in all eternity be writing at the very same table in the very same cell of the fort Taureau under circumstances wholly identical with the present (8, p. 803). Nägeli, in a striking passage in his *Die Schranken der Naturwissenschaftlichen Erkenntniss*, avers that though the possible number of combinations of matter is relatively infinite it is not absolutely so. Once exhausted they must repeat themselves. He asserts emphatically, though his argument is hardly convincing, that this conclusion is mathematically unavoidable even though we postulate centillions upon centillions of heavenly bodies or systems of them, for as compared with infinite time centillions of combinations are as nothing (72, p. 578). And in his poem entitled *L'Analyse Spectrale* Guyau writes :

"Puisque tout se ressemble et se tient dans l'espace,
Tout se copie aussi, j'en ai peur, dans le temps;
Ce qui passe revient, et ce qui revient passe:
C'est un cercle sans fin que la chaîne des ans" (40, p. 199).

Finally, Le Bon in one of his books declares that because of the limited number of possible combinations with a given number of atoms "the same world inhabited by the same beings must have repeated itself many times" (61, II, p. 420).

We see thus that this conception has had a certain fascination for many minds ever since the beginnings of philosophy. In so far, however surprised we may be to hear Nietzsche proclaim this as a new doctrine, it is not at all surprising that it should appeal to him. Indeed, there were reasons why it should be regarded with special favor by Nietzsche. Having taken all props from under society by robbing it of religion and morality, Nietzsche seeks to buttress his toppling structure by this recurrence idea. It is to make life earnest,

that is Greek, like Nietzsche became a sceptic, and like him eventually lost his reason. So close is the parallel that Daniel Halévy, *L'enfance et la Jeunesse de Nietzsche*, Revue de Paris, Vol. LXXXI, p. 117, says: "Un platonicien pourrait se plaisir à penser qu'un seul génie alla de l'un à l'autre corps."

for as you live now so you must live again and again time without end. Hence there is a motive for so living that the thought of a ceaseless recurrence does not become repellent. Doubtless it is from this point of view that Lou Andreas-Salomé calls Nietzsche's *Wieder-kunftstheorie* at once the foundation stone and the capital of his whole thought.¹ As a matter of fact it is nothing of the kind. Base and apex of Nietzsche's thought is his overman, and it is more than strange that Nietzsche did not see that these two concepts are incompatible unless our present existence is our first existence. Then there would be sense in urging men to strive higher since they could never in all their future lives transcend the level attained during their first incarnation, but Nietzsche-Zarathustra teaches explicitly that everything as it is to-day has been before. This being true what avails it to urge men to create something beyond themselves? Either the overman has existed already, and then he will return in due time whether we will or not, or, he has not existed, and if so, no effort on our part can change the course of the ages. In the light of Nietzsche's doctrine of the cyclical repetition of things his overman proves a will-o'-the-wisp, a mere conjurer's phantom.

Thus it is that Nietzsche's doctrine, if true, instead of moving man to exert himself as never before, would completely paralyze him. We would have utter fatalism. What motive is there to exert myself when no effort on my part will serve to carry me one stride beyond the past? And what becomes of the will to power which Nietzsche champions so strenuously if there is nothing but an endless recurrence of the same?

If there is any one thing more characteristic of Nietzsche's overman than anything else it is that he is pitiless. We have seen that Nietzsche's horror of pity became a sort of phobia with him. Now there is no question but that there is considerable maudlin sympathy that the world were better without. Indiscriminate charity such as that of Joseph, King of Bavaria, who morning after morning distributed a thousand guilders among the people, is nothing less than disastrous in its consequences. Joseph alone is said to have pauperized vast numbers of his subjects. (92, p. 582.) It must be such philanthropy that President Jordan has in mind when he asserts that half

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken. Wien, 1894, p. 220.

of the pauperism of the world is due to unwise charity (53, p. 62). So, again, we see how hordes of people, especially women but men too, intercede for atrocious criminals and seek to influence the authorities in a way that goes against the grain of a man. And how many women neglect their own families in order to gad about the streets and alleys of the slums, not infrequently to the disgust of the honest poor, who would much prefer to be left to themselves. Nietzsche is quite right when he holds such pity up to scorn, the pity that builds hospitals for cats and neglects babes. But there is a pity which raises and does not lower, which elevates and does not degenerate, of which Nietzsche, however, knows nothing. Again, in so far as he combats a morality based solely on sympathy, he is quite right. That leads only to Tolstoyism. And when he says that he wants to teach *Mitfreude*, instead of *Mitleiden*, he at least does well in emphasizing the one, though he errs in doing it at the expense of the other (73, V, p. 263). So, too, though few will go all the way with him, most of us would admit that there is a half-truth in his assertion that when a man who pushes an affair, carries out his decisions, holds faith with his own thoughts, overthrows and punishes the insolent, stands ready with his wrath and his good sword; in short, when a really masterful man pities, well, such a pity has value! But what value has the pity of those who are themselves weak, suffering, unfortunate. All Europe practically is diseased to the core with sensitivity to pain, with an effeminacy that seeks to hide itself under a religious and philosophic *rouge*. The pity which we find in such circles parades itself through the streets to our disgust (73, VII, p. 269).

Had Nietzsche limited himself to criticising, even castigating as he knew how, the spurious pity that flaunts itself before our eyes, his caustic pen might have done good service. But he neutralizes all the good he might have accomplished by outlawing all pity, all compassion, all commiseration, all sympathy. And surely, he should have reminded himself that, of all men, this proud disdain does not fit well into the facts of his life. Any one who reads between the lines can see in Nietzsche's letters how his heart yearned and ached for sympathy. If not, why do these letters abound with details about his sufferings? Furthermore, how did Nietzsche support himself subsequent to resigning his Basel professorship? By means of his writings?

From the biography we know that instead of making him independent they were a source of expense to him. He had, it is true, a small income of his own, but it was inadequate to his needs and constantly diminishing. What he lived on principally was the three thousand francs allowed him, the infidel, annually, by the city of Basel renowned for its piety. Doubtless Nietzsche regarded this stipend his just due yet, had they willed, the authorities, who must have found his later books highly objectionable, might have cut off his pension. Why did they not do so? I do not know, but can it be because Nietzsche could not provide for his own needs, because he was helpless, because—in a word, because—he was an object of pity? If so, then Nietzsche, the sworn enemy of any and all commiseration, who in high-stilted language tells us that as for him he will have none of it, this Nietzsche finds sustenance while seeking to immortalize himself as the great opponent, the arch-enemy of pity and all that savors of it, by eating the bread of Christian compassion. (How can one in this connection fail to think of Spinoza who—though in moderate language—also undervalues pity and sympathy, but who instead of living on charity proudly provided in his own needs by grinding lenses.) If so, then we should call a halt to the blatant iterations and reiterations of his adherents that never was man so brave, so independent, so I know not what. Mauerhof asserts positively that Nietzsche refrained from publishing the fourth book of his *Zarathustra* because he feared that its appearance might affect his pension (67, p. 444). I know of no evidence for this and in its absence distrust Mauerhof's judgment. We need not press the point. Whatever the facts may be we all agree with Nietzsche, when he denounces those who preach or practice an over-emotional sickly sentimentalism; but, fortunately, there are as yet few who stand ready to support him in his wholesale denunciations of an emotion that makes man human. In the words of President Hall: "To pity aright is a very important part of the education of the heart" (92, p. 590). Moreover, the unfortunate is not wholly useless to society. He who is incurable to-day may be saved to-morrow and develop into a worthy member of society. It is just by studying such cases that medical science advances. Fouillée does well to remind us that utilitarianism is fatal to science (29, p. 153). If man instead of seeking truth had kept in mind only that which

is useful science could never have developed. Truths that appear worthless to-day are world-compelling to-morrow.

Statistics do not bear out Nietzsche's assertion that philanthropy is reducing the vitality of society. Longevity is increasing. The science which is the means of saving those whom Nietzsche would discard is no curse to humanity. We need not yet seriously consider the advisability of abolishing our hospitals. Just here Nietzsche winds himself into a hopeless tangle. His highest gospel is natural selection—let men struggle to the death in order that the best may survive. We should, therefore, put all men on a level, for as it is now many a robust child because of an unfavorable environment is lost, whereas many a weakling is kept above the surface because of the care it happens to receive. But of putting men on a level Nietzsche will hear nothing. Never. The distinctions which exist to-day must be accentuated until we have none but masters and slaves.

Who would deny that altruism sometimes makes its mistakes, but by and large it is the basis on which the social structure rests. It is consequently, to say the least, a striking coincidence that this most unsparing critic of pity is stricken in middle life so that for eleven long years he is utterly dependent upon the sympathetic care, the tender pity of two devoted women. Would not those very Greeks at whose shrine Nietzsche worshipped so devoutly have seen in Nietzsche's fall the hand of Nemesis herself? Would they not have exclaimed: "Behold the wrath of the gods!"

I have tried to show that Nietzsche's enmity against Christianity was the inevitable outcome of his overman ideal. In so far we must respect Nietzsche for his consistency. What one cannot respect is his manner. Granted for a moment that Christianity is, as Nietzsche would have it, the worst possible thing in the world, something so reprehensible that we cannot exterminate it too rapidly, even so Nietzsche's manner can hardly be condemned with too much severity. He should have respected the convictions of those for whom Christianity is the highest good, the last anchorage in a life of storm and stress, the one thing that enables them to face the future even beyond death with equanimity, often even with a confidence and a joy that never fail to impress the beholder. Granted then that it is this we must destroy, the question whether Nietzsche's method was the proper one to follow, is not difficult to answer. There is but one answer.

Nietzsche does not hesitate to wantonly outrage the feelings of hosts of his fellowmen who happen to cherish what he maligns. Every effort to minimize the gravity of Nietzsche's offence in this particular is out of place. The greater part of Nietzsche's polemic against Christianity is not polemic at all. It is empty vituperation. Any one who is at all familiar with the searching criticism to which Christianity has been subjected by other thinkers ever since the days of Celsus will be disappointed with the paucity of the *Antichrist*. I doubt whether Nietzsche raises a single objection that has not been made many times before. His levity, too, is out of place. "If there were gods," says Nietzsche, "how could I bear to be no God! Consequently there are no Gods" (74, VIII, p. 116). Though put in a syllogistic form surely Nietzsche cannot intend this as an argument against the being of God. Such logic would compare admirably with the ancient doggerel :

" If A is a turnip
And B is a flea,
Then C equals tweedle—
Dumdee."

Logic of this type would justly expose Nietzsche to the suspicion of being one of those who, according to Descartes, seek the reputation of being bold thinkers by audaciously impugning truths of the greatest moment. Although it seems impossible that Nietzsche can have been in a serious mood when he wrote the passage just quoted, its solipsism is in entire harmony with his other utterances.

I do not care to take up one by one Nietzsche's fulminations against Christianity. It would not be worth while, for such arguments as he brings have been threshed over repeatedly. As early as the second half of the secoud century Celsus like Nietzsche said that Christianity is fit only for the poor, the ignorant, and the foolish. Like Nietzsche's the accusations of Celsus were marked by violent hatred and bitter scorn, invective, and mockery (60, I, p. 89). So the charge made by Nietzsche and others that it was Paul the apostle who perverted the truths of Jesus, dates back to the third century when Porphyry said precisely the same thing. Harnack tells us that Porphyry cherished an antipathy against Paul as against no other (43, I, p. 415; also 70, p. 189).

Permit me to answer one accusation of which Nietzsche makes so

much and then we can pass on, for we have already considered Nietzsche's censure of pity, which emotion more than any other embitters him against Christianity. Christian morality, declares Nietzsche, is a servile morality. But has not emancipation from serfdom gone hand in hand with the spread of Christianity? Against this it might be urged that precisely on that account Christianity fosters mediocrity. Should we not much rather uphold the interests of the few as against those of the many? That does not follow. To be sure the Christian ideal is essentially democratic, it breaks down many distinctions but is none the less, nay all the more, aristocratic in the true sense of the word. As Professor Seth says, Christianity does not level down but up (96, p. 111). Christianity nowhere teaches that all men are created equal, it does teach that all men stand alike before God. It sees in every man possibilities which the best Pagan insight could find only in the few. Need we go beyond the pales of the Christian Church to seek ensamples of noble chivalry and heroic courage?

Beyond question there are abuses upon which Nietzsche's heavy hand falls justly. If the Church degenerates until it is little more than an almoner for the rich, or an ossuary of marrowless dogmas, or a mere hierarchy of rites and ceremonies, or a sodality of women and devitalized men with an emasculated herdsman to lead them, then it lays itself open to attack. The sooner it comes the better. The Church to-day may well search itself closely whether Nietzsche as a sign of the times has not somewhat to say unto her to which she should diligently hearken. This being granted so far as Nietzsche is concerned what he brings us is after all so jejune that were it not for his virulence and his rhetoric, he could never have gained the public ear.

It cannot be gainsaid that Nietzsche's most poisonous arrows are directed not so much against its founder as against Christianity itself. Yet Jesus was for Nietzsche a pathologically effeminate soul, an interesting décadent (74, VIII, p. 255). Such is his language. And this is the Jesus who is, indeed, called the Lamb of God, but also the Lion of Judah; who is heralded as the Prince of Peace, but also as the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father. This is the Jesus who says, "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62); who says elsewhere that the Son of Man shall be seen "coming in the clouds of heaven with power" (Matt. 24:30). Peabody in his Lyman Beecher lectures shows how

often this word "power" is applied in the New Testament to the influence of Jesus (83, pp. 52, 53). It is here that so much art sins in wiping every virile trait from the countenance of Jesus. He was pre-eminently manly. Who but a powerful personality, not necessarily of mere physical strength but of commanding mien, could single-handed have driven the whole horde of money-changers out of the precincts of the temple? The presence of scribes or Pharisees watching him "whether He would heal on the Sabbath day that they might accuse him" (Mark 3:2), never deterred Jesus from a deed of mercy. He did not hesitate to go up for the last time to Jerusalem though so well aware of what awaited him that "He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him" (Mark 10:32).

Again, if there is any one thing that stands out clearly with regard to his preaching it is that "the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority" (Matt. 7:28, 29). Even his enemies exclaimed: "Lo, he speaketh boldly" (John 7:26). Indeed, this sense of mastery and restrained force is one of the distinctive traits of Jesus' character. He did not argue with the people as did the scribes and Pharisees, He moved them by the magnetism of his personality. He spake without fear or favor. Addressing his own people in Nazareth the folk "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22), but speaking to the Pharisees he exhibited his fearlessness of these men in power by attacking their shams and abuses with an indignation white-hot in its fierceness, before which even they quailed, withered by his scorn. You must seek long if you wish to find an attack so annihilating as that recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. Is Jesus acting the part attributed to him by Nietzsche when, well knowing that the scribes and Pharisees were "seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him" (Luke 11:54), he denounces them to their very faces with his terrible: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matt. 23.)

Again it cannot be denied that the character of Jesus is often distorted and that by his professed disciples. His love is magnified at the expense of his justice. He is held before us as the embodiment of all that is gentle, tender, compassionate, but how rarely are we called upon to follow Jesus, Master of men. Yet, though it be true

that Jesus is sometimes represented as a being open to some of the charges made by Nietzsche, even so we cannot forget that Nietzsche knew his Bible and that he could have known better and should have known better than to mistake a caricature for the original.

Nietzsche wanted to set aside not only Christianity but current morality as well. This is natural because our morals are largely Christian. Without entering into the question of genesis must we not presuppose life in accordance with certain norms if it is to be human at all? Would man still be human if every rule of conduct were set aside? Nietzsche seems to realize this and so if he reevaluates all values and pronounces those now current as found wanting, he offers us instead something infinitely better—his famous master and slave morality. Its nature has been outlined on a previous page. We saw that the etymologies upon which he bases this double standard of conduct are wholly untrustworthy, so palpably erroneous that even those scholars who are sympathetic to Nietzsche refuse to accept his derivations. Nietzsche's assertion that our present-day ethics have been imposed upon us by the Jews with malice aforethought is even more fanciful, so absurd from a historical viewpoint that it merits no consideration at all. As Dolson says in her monograph: "One would be almost disposed to think that one had mistaken Nietzsche's meaning, if he had not been so explicit, and if the numerous commentators upon his work were not practically at one upon the matter" (17, p. 74).

Admittedly there is much in society to-day that is far from being as it should be. No Daniel need come to judgment to tell us that. Yet it may be well that some Peter the Hermit should descend upon us from time to time to awaken us from our lethargy, to open our eyes to the vice that surrounds us and dwells within our very hearts, to preach a crusade against all iniquity, but if such were Nietzsche's purpose he was woefully ill-advised in choosing his methods.

The only outcome of such an *Umwertung* as Nietzsche planned is language such as that used by a young nihilist of whom Kropotkin tells somewhere. Why, asks this young man, why should I not become immoral? Because the Bible forbids? But the Bible is only a collection of fables like the stories of Homer. Because of Kant's categorical imperative? Why should this imperative have more authority over my actions than that other imperative that compels me to get intoxicated every so often? Or should I be moral to please Bentham

who would have me believe that it is more happy to lose my life in the attempt to save a drowning stranger than it is to look on and see him drown? Or, finally, should I be moral because my mother so taught me? If so, then I must do a host of other nonsensical things because my mother, good soul, who like all mothers was an excellent but ignorant woman, taught me.

To such cynicism leads Nietzsche's philosophy. Like the Cynics Nietzsche is characterized by a profound contempt for civilization and for traditional ideals. Like them he is extremely individualistic and mistakes brutality for independence of opinion. Nietzsche has the same contempt for man that one sees in Diogenes of Sinope who roams through Athens seeking, not as is often said, "an honest man," but with far greater cynicism seeking—"a man" (62, I, p. 193). Likewise Nietzsche, weary of the man of to-day seeks the overman. Lichtenberger would have us believe that Nietzsche was anything but a cynic. Let Lichtenberger look at the facts. I say nothing of his private life, but think of his writings, and then tell me if it is unfair to say of Nietzsche as Diogenes Laertes said of Antisthenes:

"In life you were a bitter dog, Antisthenes,
Born to bite people's minds with sayings sharp."
(16, p. 223; see also 99, Chap. I.)

One phase of Nietzsche's cynicism we see in his references to woman. In how far Nietzsche's criticism of woman is an aftermath of Schopenhauer's influence I know not, but that his strictures are as a whole unjust everybody but a confirmed woman-hater will admit. Never having married, never having had a wide acquaintance with the sex only serves to further invalidate his conclusions. Despite his under-valuation of woman and despite his frequent brutality of utterance there is, strange to say, much in and about Nietzsche that suggests a feminine personality. As a woman idolizes her hero so Nietzsche during his first period worships Schopenhauer and Wagner. If he sees any weaknesses, any faults in them, woman-like he closes his eyes in order that he may turn his gaze not upon the real Schopenhauer and the real Wagner but upon the immaculate image he has set up within himself. When it finally dawns upon Nietzsche that he has deceived himself, when it not only dawns upon him but blinds him by the glare of full realization, how truly feminine is his revulsion. A man

would have seen his mistake and ashamed of his folly would have swallowed his disappointment with resentment against himself; but a woman would have seized upon her idol, stripped it of all the tinsel with which she once adorned it, and, not satisfied as yet, would have hurled it from its pedestal to break it, if possible, into a hundred thousand pieces. This is precisely what Nietzsche did. He turns upon Wagner in his *Der Fall Wagner* and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner* with an impetuosity that leaves us breathless. While his revulsion against Schopenhauer was never so complete as against Wagner the difference was only one of degree. This excess of feeling, this lack of consistent thinking, this jumping to conclusions which man rightly or wrongly commonly attributes to woman, is characteristic of all Nietzsche's utterances.

Of course Nietzsche's cynicism is only one result of his individualism. No man who has once sounded the depths of the soul, nay, who has only so much as glimpsed beneath its surface, can be a crass individualist of the Stirner-Nietzschean type. Man is gregarious by instinct and as a member of society he soon realizes the need of certain limitations. A society organized on Nietzsche's plan would, as somebody has said of Stirner's ideal, bury its founder like Samson under the ruins of the structure. Absolute egoism is self-destructive. Just so soon as society changes into so many pure individualists, just so soon has it signed its own death warrant. Nietzsche seems at times to have a subliminal inkling of this for ever and anon he comes back to his two classes—masters and slaves, *i. e.*, although he gets rid of the latter by ignoring them he merely reduces society by so many. He does not destroy it. Yet how can the masters join to form a society without subjecting themselves to certain limitations however few, without surrendering something of their individuality? This difficulty never seems to have worried Nietzsche. Had it one can readily prophesy the consequence. Uncompromising egoist that he was Nietzsche would have ridden roughshod over his masters as he always did over his slaves, and would have sacrificed this last vestige of society to his own idea of liberty. There is, therefore, no exaggeration in saying of Nietzsche's ideals that their realization would prove the direst calamity to the race. Anarchism would reign supreme. It is true Nietzsche abhorred the anarchists as he did the socialists. He speaks of anarchist dogs that howl through the streets of Europe

and it would grieve him sorely to hear his name associated with theirs (73, VII, p. 135). It is true, too, that only recently Palante in an issue of the *Revue Philosophique* tries to show laboriously that there is a pretty well-defined line of demarcation between individualism and anarchism (78, pp. 337-365), but after all, even though the terms be not synonymous would not absolute individualism, if introduced, result in complete anarchism?

Though there is justification for calling Nietzsche an anarchist in spite of his disclaimer, to rank him with socialists reveals dense ignorance of Nietzsche's world-view. Yet many German socialists coquette with Nietzsche and speak of him as if he were one of them (99, p. 31). How is it possible that a class of men whom Nietzsche despised from his innermost soul nevertheless turn to his works to arm themselves with telling weapons against their foe? This is possible in the first place, because the majority of them have no conception of what Nietzsche really stands for. Secondly, because Nietzsche in his individualism has nothing but contempt for the organized state, contempt which socialists share with him. Hence Nietzsche's writings naturally become their arsenal from which they equip themselves with some of their most pungent phrases. Though Nietzsche protests vigorously: "I do not wish to be confounded with, and mistaken for these creatures of equality," he has, notwithstanding, become their prophet (74, VIII, p. 138).

Nietzsche spared nothing and nobody. As Virgil speaking of Ephialtes says to Dante:

"‘‘ This proud one
Would of his strength against Almighty Jove
Make trial’’ (*Inferno*, Canto XXXI, lines 82-84).

so Nietzsche, according to Huneker, "used a battering ram of rare dialectic skill, and crash go the religious, social, and artistic fabrics reared ages since" (51, p. 133). Is it not to laugh? Were the outcome less tragic the picture would be nothing less than ludicrous. Imagine this modern Quixote astride his valiant dithyrambic steed, his frail logical lance in the rest, charging full tilt not against some harmless windmill but against the impregnable strongholds of truth, society, morality, and religion. Yet lo, behold, terrified by the terrific onslaught these eternal walls like those of Jericho tremble, totter and

fall! Will some men never learn? Is every latest attack upon the basal verities to be conclusive? Huneker for one, though an admirer of Nietzsche, does not lose his head for he continues: "But when the brilliant smoke of his style clears away we still see standing the same venerable institutions" (51, p. 133).

Nietzsche deserves a place in the history of philosophy if for no other reason than to show how mad it is to philosophize "with the hammer." It is as yet too early to predict what Nietzsche's place among the thinkers of the world is to be. I suspect it will not be a large place, but I venture to say that what will assure him at least a niche in the hall of fame is not his emphasis of the active as opposed to the passive, though that is as it should be, not his holding out bravely against all socialistic propaganda, not his theories of art and culture, or of the place of history in education; it is nothing of all this, it is that he is the entelechy of many of the movements of the past. In a negative way he has dared more than ever man ventured before. That, it seems to me, is the key to Nietzsche's significance. Though he never originated a single really new conception he precipitated and crystallized within himself many of the ideas of the past. He has pushed mere physiological selection, individualism, solipsism, cynicism, skepticism, enmity against Christianity, to their Ultima Thule. He should serve as an eternal beacon warning men that there are rocks which one approaches at his peril. He illustrates the bankruptcy of a life built wholly upon reason. Nietzsche would believe nothing, not even the existence of truth. For Nietzsche there are no axioms, no self-evident truths. Yet if we must demonstrate everything we are in a sorry plight indeed. The mere fact that such a new old *credo* as pragmatism can cause such a commotion to-day, not among laymen who know not the language of the schools, but among those very men whose lives are sacred to the study of philosophy shows that in solving the ultimate riddles of the universe we have advanced nothing beyond the Greeks. The same old problems are still with us, we are still discussing whether the world is one or many, the possibility of certitude, the nature of truth, of the absolute, and of a number of other things.

This is not pessimism, it is the very best kind of optimism or at least leads to it. We all pity the man who wastes his time in the vain endeavor to write an epic when he has in him an expert bridge-builder. Being ignorant of his limitations he wrecks his career and involves

who knows how many others. To endeavor the impossible may be a grand thing but it is the last essence of folly. To pluck at the unreachable may not ruin your dry-as-dust, ossified, Teutonic theorizer, long since lost in the mazes of scholastic verbiage, but the man of fiery imagination tantalized by the ever elusive answer jeopardizes his sanity. Especially if, like Nietzsche, he abandons his profession, foregoes the companionship of his fellows, lives the life of an ascetic and perpetually grapples with all manner of things inscrutable, phantom or real. And how bootless it all is. We see this in Nietzsche. What has his sacrifice added to our store of hard-won knowledge? Not one iota. He has said some old things in a new way but not one single enigma has he solved. DuBois-Reymond's categories of inexplicables still stand intact. Indeed, as I shall show later, Nietzsche has only added to the confusion.

Should we not profit by Nietzsche's doom? If instead of squandering his time and involving himself in no end of misery by vain efforts to scale the heavens, Nietzsche had turned to the thousand and one problems that jostled him on all sides challenging solution because they are soluble, I say, if Nietzsche had done this what might he not with his talents have accomplished? We may rebel but the fact remains, whoever seeks, like Nietzsche, to transcend human limitations must, if he be made of the stuff martyrs are made of, pay the penalty. We may beat our heads against the adamantine walls of the unknowable but we shall only damage ourselves. Nietzsche will not have lived in vain if his tragedy brings home to us the truth that even the most venturesome of men, the Columbuses who eagerly seek admission into that region over whose entrance is chiseled *ignoramus*, may well consider before they hurl themselves against that other portal, sealed with many seals, over which is written in burning characters—*ignorabimus*.

That such a barrier exists Nietzsche perceived clearly enough early in his career for in the *Birth of Tragedy* we read: "The noble and gifted mind . . . has been unavoidably brought face to face with the unexplainable" (73, I, p. 108). He saw Du Bois-Reymond's flaming symbols but heeding them not rode to his destruction. Knowing this we now see a world of meaning in his otherwise meaningless poem, *Among Birds of Prey*. It was written less than a year before the night of insanity forever darkened his mind and suggests the anguish of a lost soul.

Nietzsche's shipwreck on the rocks of reason should convince us that what we need is faith. If we cannot demonstrate the absolute-ness of truth, if we cannot demonstrate a supreme reality, if we cannot demonstrate the existence of God, is that to hinder us from satisfying a felt need that will not be downed by believing in things many of us, most of us, *feel* must exist. You object that faith narrows a man. If so, does not this limitation bring its own reward? Is it not proverbially the narrow stream that runs deep which excavates its channel, not the broad river that covers no end of territory but loses itself in empty shallows? Your mere latitudinarian never does anything worth the doing. He is neither hot nor cold, fish nor fowl, one can look for greater things from an out-and-out Nietzschean than from him. It is the man who, often doubtless, despite his narrowness, his dogmatism if you please, but who believes in big things, transcendental things, with all his heart and soul, it is he who moves the world. Of course these are bald platitudes, but it will not harm us to remind ourselves that from a psychological standpoint nothing is more true than that it is only faith that can make men whole.

One likes not to sit in judgment on another. I prefer to let Nietzsche weigh himself. He says somewhere :

"When I recently attempted to familiarize myself with my earlier writings that I had forgotten, I was shocked to perceive that there was one characteristic common to all of them: they speak the language of fanaticism. Almost in every instance when others are referred to, that sanguinary manner of calumniating and that enthusiastic wickedness are evident which are the tokens of fanaticism—hateful tokens because of which I could not have finished the reading of these writings had the author been only a little less known to me." (69, p. 25.)

Refreshingly sane you say? Yes. But yet his introspection availed nothing. If he said this in 1880 of his earlier works what must we now say of his later books? It is patent to everybody that throughout Nietzsche's tone grows shriller and shriller, his "sanguinary manner of calumniating" constantly more and more sanguinary, his "enthusiastic wickedness" constantly more and more wicked. As I think of Nietzsche's splendid opportunities, his superior intellect, his bold imagination, and his wonderful gift of language, as I think of what he was and did compared with what he might have been and done, I feel that I cannot better close this chapter than to exclaim with Byron :

“This should have been a noble creature: he
 Hath all the energy which would have made
 A goodly frame of glorious elements,
 Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
 It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,
 And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts,
 Mix'd, and contending without end or order,—
 All dormant or destructive” (*Manfred*, Act III, Scene 1).

VII. *Nietzsche's Influence.*

“Friedrich Nietzsche is the greatest European event since Goethe” (77, p. 11,), says a writer whose enthusiasm eclipses his discrimination. Extravagant this pronunciamento unquestionably is, yet at the same time it must be confessed that few of us have more than the faintest idea of how large Nietzsche looms across the water. So we hear people saying: “Nietzsche, why bother with him?” Yet from the standpoint of science any cause whatever that produces serious consequences is worthy of careful investigation. I want to show briefly that Nietzsche is such a cause. Since in a study of this sort there is always great danger of attributing to an individual phenomena excited by nobody in particular but wrought rather by the all-pervading activity of the *Zeitgeist*, it will be well to avoid this pitfall by adhering rigidly to instances where the relationship of cause and effect is indisputable. Such a relationship probably cannot be said to exist either way between Ibsen and Nietzsche, for example, though both have much in common. We find in Ibsen the same individualism, the same emphasis of the will, the same poetic imagination, if less extravagant, that we find in Nietzsche, but direct influence of one upon the other there does not seem to be.

The more one studies the situation the more one is convinced that, as a writer in the *Nation* expresses it, Nietzsche is “the most powerful molder of modern German thought” (Vol. 85, p. 370), at least in so far as we may judge it by its literature. Engel assures us that Nietzsche's influence in Germany can be found in every *genre* of letters. He affected young-Germany much as Fichte did the romanticists (23, II, pp. 1015-1016). Stein laments that Nietzsche has become the philosopher-hero of the day (99, p. 7). Pringle-Pattison avers that “in Germany he [Nietzsche] has succeeded to the vogue of Schopenhauer and the more temporary popularity of von Hartmann; the sober occupants of

philosophical chairs complain that he is at present the philosopher *à la mode*" (86, p. 254). Paulsen remarks that "on the application-blanks of our public libraries the name of Nietzsche occurs more frequently, perhaps, than any other" (81, p. 153). Friedmann, speaking of Nietzsche declares that he not only influenced much of latter-day thought but that he has in large part furnished the philosophical substrate for much of our contemporary art, especially the drama (32, II, p. 440). Eucken does not hesitate to say that in ignorance of Nietzsche we simply cannot understand the life-currents of to-day (24, p. 507). Our own Huneker says of Nietzsche that "he has set his imprint on all European culture, from the dream novels of that Italian of the Renaissance, the new Cellini, Gabrielle d'Annunzio, to the Pole Przybyszewski, who has transformed Nietzsche into a very Typhoon of emotion" (51, p. 19). Steiger asserts that the second literary revolution of this century in Norway and Denmark proceeded from Nietzsche (98, II, p. 300). Gottschall informs us that no philosopher before Nietzsche had so radical, so deep-reaching an influence upon the letters of his day as Nietzsche has upon the new revolutionists. On another page the same writer avers that Nietzsche has brought about an indescribable perplexity in the minds of many (36, IV, pp. 622, 624). Martersteig, as late as 1904, speaks of Nietzsche's influence on creative art as great and still growing. At the same time he admits with Gottschall that Nietzsche's teachings have caused a wide-spread confusion (66, p. 501). Düringer assures us that in "circles" and clubs generally, especially such as interest themselves in the æsthetic, be it letters or art, Nietzsche is an object of paramount interest. There are even *Nietzsche-Vereine* which burden themselves with the task of making propaganda for their master (21, p. 3). Finally, Berg, who is an authority in this field, tells us that once Nietzsche's star began to rise it was but a moment and all Europe was startled by its brilliancy. Men boasted of their rights as egos, made debts, drank themselves drunk, seduced maidens, all in the name of Zarathustra. Berg tells of one man who, as an overman, claimed the privilege of expectorating about him in a highly offensive manner. Another treated his boy to gin, which occasioning surprise elicited the reply that this boy was to become an overman (6, pp. 216, 217). Düringer claims that time and again he has learned of cases in which the writings of Nietzsche caused profound estrangement between husband and wife. In one case a man proceeded

to beat his wife while calling upon Nietzsche to justify his brutality (21, p. 74).

Poor Nietzsche! To what a pass have his teachings come. "Mine enemies have grown strong and have distorted the face of my teaching" (74, VIII, p. 112), complains Zarathustra, but it is his friends that make Nietzsche ludicrous. He would have been the last to practice such coarseness and yet the outcome is precisely what was to be expected. It avails nothing to say that were he alive to-day Nietzsche would promptly cast off the allegiance of most of his followers. They are merely putting his theories into practice. No man can denounce society, altruism, morality, religion, no man can preach the revaluation of all values in order to put them on a purely egoistic basis which places might above right, and then justly turn upon those who seek to carry out his most cherished plans.

I trust this much will suffice to indicate the range of Nietzsche's influence and to at least hint at its nature. Instead of losing myself in a mass of details I shall now select a few specially striking examples that may serve as types for the rest.

First, then, we have the remarkable example of Nietzsche's influence upon music in Richard Strauss's famous orchestral poem "*Also sprach Zarathustra*." A mighty conflict has raged about Strauss. He has been denounced, he has been lauded; he has been excommunicated, he has been deified; yet, differ as the critics may, not even his most energetic opponents deny that Strauss is the leading composer of his time. Pratt declares that Strauss "is at present the most conspicuous figure in both the orchestral and the operatic fields. His command of every technical resource is phenomenal, his ambition and energy impressive, and his originality and artistic daring unquestioned" (85, p. 638). Inspired by Nietzsche Strauss has given us an *opus* which by some is declared a masterpiece that ranks with the best that has yet been done, although there are not lacking those who protest that it is not music at all. Strauss does not profess to give us a musical representation of Nietzsche's philosophy. He says expressly:

"'I did not intend to write philosophical music, or to portray Nietzsche's great work musically. I meant to convey in music an idea of the development of the human race from its origin, through the various phases of development, religious as well as scientific, up to Nietzsche's idea of the *Uebermensch*'" (101, p. 327).

In a single musical composition Strauss wants to epitomize the

struggle of the race. Verily, his modesty is of that egregious sort cultivated by Nietzsche. Yet let us look at the work somewhat from the viewpoint of those who see in Strauss's *chef-d'œuvre* a forward step in musical progress. As Nietzsche's book opens with Zarathustra on the summit of a high mountain enveloped by the splendor of a new day so Strauss's composition begins with a glorious sunrise scene. The prophet is overcome by pantheistic raptures but soon feels himself mastered by the insatiable desire to find an answer to the riddles of the universe. He is attacked by doubt. Out of the conflict that rages within him springs a mighty impulse to action. Zarathustra goes down among men, revels in their pleasures till, overcome with repugnance of such a life, he chants the grave song of his youth and seeks consolation in science. Then comes convalescence ending in the dance which is interrupted by the bell of midnight.

At this point Zarathustra begins his journey into eternity. Some of the passages in Strauss's work are said to be of imposing grandeur. Others, though hideous, reveal the hand of the master. We are told, for example, that laughter, such as that in Strauss's composition, has never been heard before. Nietzsche speaks much of laughter as he does of humor, gay science, the dance, and yet as one reads Nietzsche, his mirth brings no sympathetic smile to our faces. Quite the reverse. "There is ice in their laughter," says Zarathustra (74, VIII, p. 13), and so Nietzsche's cachinations make us shiver as does a blast of the north wind. We are chilled to the bone. If Strauss succeeds in producing laughter such as that which reverberates through the chambers and corridors of Nietzsche's heart, it must be terrifying indeed. We have found Nietzsche bizarre, cynical, ironic, witty at times, wicked often; all these things one hears in Strauss's music. Huneker, in his dazzling fashion, interprets it for us thus:

"The themes appear, disappear, surge to insanity in their passion, melt into religious appeal, dance with bacchanalian joy, mock, blaspheme, exhort, and enchant. There is ugly music and hieratic, music bitter and sweet, black music and white, music that repels and music that lures—we are hopelessly tangled by the dream tunes of this enharmonic fowler, who often pipes in No Man's Land on the other side of good and evil" (51, p. 13).

Again, in another forcible passage, Huneker says:

"This is the vastest and most difficult score ever penned. It is a cathedral in tone, sublime and fantastic, with its grotesque gargoyles, hideous flying abut-

ments, exquisite traceries, prodigious arches, half gothic, half infernal, huge and resounding spaces, gorgeous façades, and heaven-splitting spires—a mighty musical structure" (*op. cit.*, p. 46).

If this is a true description of Strauss's symphonic poem, it is an edifice supremely adapted to be the abiding-place of Nietzsche's Zarathustra.

As an example of Nietzsche's literary influence, which does not belong to the class of books reading which we feel as if we were grovelling in the cesspools of society where dehumanized beings pass their existence, I select Adolf Wilbrandt's *Osterinsel* (104). This is really a striking book. That Wilbrandt had Nietzsche in mind when he delineated for us the portrait of his Doctor Adler is indubitable. Like Nietzsche this Adler is first a pro-later an anti-Schopenhauerian, like Nietzsche he is a minister's son, devout as a boy, has difficulties later with his publishers, depreciates the German people, and is at heart a broken man who accomplishes his final ruin by the use of narcotics (*op. cit.*, pp. 114, 130, 161, 118). Yet Adler is not a *facsimile* of Nietzsche. Thus his *Uebermenschentum* is precipitated by the death of his wife, a touch of sentiment that Nietzsche would have contemned.

Sitting beside the dead body of his Anna Marie, Adler recalls how often she mourned the philistinism of their day, the ceaseless striving for comfort, for peace at any price, the antagonism to all that is really great, the effort to keep alive so much that should perish, the senseless pity, pity, pity; thinking of this Adler rises in his might and vows that he will lead men to higher things, to a new day. In his passion he cries:

"Now that you have made your way from worm to man can you no further? Can you not realize in yourself your gods? You are to be god-men as distinguished from the ape-men you once were, you still are. Look at man. What is he? A transition. As the ape-man bridged the gaps between you and what is below, so you must bridge the gap between yourself and the god-man. Regenerate yourself, rejuvenate yourself as does the phoenix. Be what you dream. Conquer man as he did the ape" (*op. cit.*, pp. 36, 37).

This experiment is to be made on the Osterinsel somewhere in the Pacific. On the Osterinsel there shall be no Christianity for than Chrisianity there is no greater misfortune that could come to man. It is for the diminutive, the weak, the sick, it makes a hospital of the

world, it chants of a vale of tears whereas it should break into a chorus of joy and victory.

Adler makes three disciples, interesting characters every one of them. But all his plans with and for them come to naught. One follower proves to be a beggarly scamp who robs Adler's daughter of her patrimony; another turns out to be a sort of Tolstoyan ascetic; only the third has in him some of the stuff out of which overmen are made, though even he is defective in many ways. Thus he is far too tender to hope for a place among Nietzsche's blond beasts.

One of the most suggestive things about Wilbrandt's whole book is that its best parts are precisely those in which the author forgets Nietzsche. Little Klärchen is the best drawn figure in the book. She, fortunately, knows nothing of Nietzsche but is what she should be, a live, healthy, charming little girl.

Meerkerk's *De Starrenborg* (68), is a book that in spite of defects merits consideration especially because the writer, though palpably an admirer of Nietzsche, all unwittingly, I think, exposes to view the rock upon which Nietzscheanism is bound to shatter. Starrenborg is a heroic soul equipped with a will approaching in strength that of the immortal Brand. He believes that the much-too-many should be, if not exterminated, at the very least left to their fate. Yet, and here is the significant point, when Starrenborg discovers that all but one of his four children are tainted with the same dread malady—insanity, what does he do? All that he can to prolong their lives.

We see exactly the same thing in Nietzsche's sister. She swears by her brother's philosophy, yet when he went hopelessly mad did she shove him over the brink on whose edge he tottered? Did she shake him off as one who hindered her in realizing the goal of existence? Did she so much as abandon him to the tender mercy of others? We know better. According to her own account she nursed him, and loved him, and coddled him, and doubtless would have died for him; all of which, however natural, is criminal from Nietzsche's standpoint. Obviously it is one thing to teach and preach, *werdet hart*, it is another thing to practice what one preaches when it comes to one's own kindred.

Another book of the same type though by no means its equal, is Heyse's *Ueber allen Gipfeln* (46), Nietzsche's ideas come to the surface repeatedly (see especially pages 30, 72, 73, 93, 94, 103, 147-149, 207), but the hero is after all much more of a gallant than he is an overman.

Indeed, one of the secondary characters approaches Nietzsche's ideal much more closely than the chief actor. On the whole, the book is empty and tedious.

Ellen Key, the Swedish writer on educational and other subjects has been markedly influenced by Nietzsche. Take, for example, her chapter on *The School of the Future* in her *The Century of the Child* (56); this indictment of educational conditions of the present savors strongly of Nietzsche. Her very words have a ring that betray their origin.

We must proceed now to my third and last type, the uncompromising so-called realist. It is here that Nietzsche's effect upon contemporary literature is most in evidence. Were one limited to a single example of this school the choice should fall on August Strindberg. He is less pornographic than many and possesses more elemental vigor probably than either Sudermann or Hauptmann. We find in Strindberg the same egoistic traits that we found in Nietzsche. Hirsch says of Strindberg that he invariably speaks of himself as great and renowned because of his art and scholarship (47, p. 222). According to Berg (6, p. 123), Strindberg was the first to reveal the impress of Nietzsche. *Tschandala*, *Mit dem Feuer Spielen*, and *An Offener See* all reveal this impress. Particularly the latter pictures the overman type of hero. He does what others could not even fancy themselves doing, he knows what others never yet conceived, he is moody, has human passions but lacks the social instincts of humanity. The book reveals the same misogyny that marred Nietzsche only it is much intensified. The hero is an overman who stands so far above the mob that he must not so much as come into contact with the *canaille*, not even as their lord.

That Nietzsche directly affected both Sudermann and Hauptmann is asserted in so many words by Friedmann, for instance, in his *Das deutsche Drama* (32, p. 440). Other critics support this view whose correctness will not be questioned by those who have read the dramatists in question. Sudermann has a number of Nietzsche's traits. He is pessimistic to the core—temperamentally not philosophically. In his *Jolanthes Hochzeit* (1892), and in *Die Schmetterlingschlacht* (1894), Sudermann endeavored to break away from his pessimism, but in vain. Like Nietzsche, Sudermann repudiates traditional ethics, like Nietzsche he is strongly individualistic, and like Nietzsche he preaches the doctrine of force.

“*Herrschens soll allein die Stärke*,” says Hans Lorbass in *Die drei Reiherfedern* (1899), (Act 1, Scene 1). So *Johannes* (1898) teems with expressions that suggest Nietzsche’s aphorisms. “Learn silence,” says John laconically as Nietzsche says, “become hard.” “With the law,” says John a little later, “I have nothing to do” (Act 1, scene 9). Towards the end of the play Sudermann’s hero says: “Verily, the time for my going-down has come, the time when my enemies sing my praises and my friends revile me” (Act 4, scene 7). In the majority of Sudermann’s plays the actors fall roughly into two groups—masters and slaves, the former relentless in their power, the latter despicable with their pity and meekness.

It is true that in his *Drei Reden* (1900) Sudermann assails Nietzsche for his egoism but this does not alter the fact that Sudermann himself has not escaped infection.

Hauptmann’s early work is not tainted with Nietzsche’s philosophy but beginning with *Die Versunkene Glocke* (1896), Hauptmann comes under the magician’s spell. How deeply he has drunk from Nietzsche’s fountain we see especially in the third act of *The Sunken Bell*. It is saturated with Nietzschean ideas. While it is impossible to go into details here the reader can satisfy himself of the truth of my assertion by turning to the play itself.

As another instance of my last type I want to mention Hermann Conradi, one of Nietzsche’s earliest disciples. That Nietzsche made a profound impression upon Conradi is evident on the surface. Unfortunately much of what he wrote is not fit to be read. In one of his books he records the generation of the overman in a scene that is shocking in its coarseness. Indeed, Conradi only just escaped trial for disseminating obscene matter by dying (42, p. 196).

Limitations of time and space prevent one’s speaking of all the rest, even those who have attained to more or less prominence. There is Franz Evers with his *Königslieder*, Przybyszewski with his horrible *Totentanz der Liebe*, and the terrible d’Annunzio who portrays only the lowest passions, all these and others more have sat at the feet of Nietzsche. This is not saying that he can be held accountable for all these men say and do but it is exceedingly significant to note the class of writers with whom Nietzsche has the greatest prestige. When this wave of naturalism will come to its flood-tide nobody knows. One of our own critics thought he had found it in Gorky’s *Nachtasyl* (51, p.

272). One may well believe that uglier quagmire could never exist and yet we are told that Gorky is passing out of favor in Russia. He is too tame. Leonid Andreef, who surpasses Gorky in depicting the horrible, has ousted the latter from first place. But Andreef's reign is now threatened by one Erastoff. After one critic's miscalculation another may well be slow in saying: "This is the last word in naturalism."

Bernard Shaw belongs almost in a class of his own. That Shaw has not read Nietzsche without assimilating some of his philosophy he would, I think, be the first to admit. The very title, *Man and Superman*, speaks for itself. We all know this play. The hero races across Europe in an automobile to escape the girl who wants to marry him. He is picked up by Spanish brigands whose leader is none other than a one-time Savoy waiter. In this romantic, fantastic husk Shaw wishes to convey the thought that man's evolution into the Superman is to be a process of sexual selection, which drives women to seek marriage in order that they may have children. In all this man plays a very subordinate rôle. The whole play is an astonishing melodramatic compound of realism and romanticism with a liberal sprinkling of Nietzschean aphorisms. These crop out especially in the chief of the *dramatis personae*, John Tanner, who, for instance, says:

"Marriage is the most licentious of human institutions. . . . That is the secret of its popularity, and a woman seeking a husband is the most unscrupulous of all the beasts of prey. The confusion of marriage with morality has done more to destroy the conscience of the human race than any other single error (97, Act III).

In true Nietzschean fashion Tanner speaks of breeding the race "to heights now deemed superhuman" (*op. cit.*), and what is Shaw's "Life Force" if it is not Nietzsche's "Will to Power?"

That Nietzsche's influence upon present day life is not to be ignored has now, I trust, become apparent. The question that straightway suggests itself is this: How can a thinker whose philosophy cannot be brought into harmony with itself exercise such a tremendous influence? In answering this question we should first keep clearly in mind that the effects of a man's writings are not seldom wholly out of proportion to their intrinsic merit, to the amount of truth or error they may contain. If an unusual personality succeeds in objectifying himself in some book, or painting, or statue, or whatever it may be, he is

almost certain to find his admirers. Now Nietzsche has put himself into his books as has probably no other thinker. They reflect his every longing, his every fear, his hopes, his despair, all his moods and circumstances. And this he embodies not in a snug metaphysical structure every part of which is essential to every other part, but in a vast array of aphorisms that are by no means in *Einklang* so that his many volumes constitute an inexhaustible storehouse of highly polished phrases adapted to the most varying phases of thought.

It is therefore in no way surprising that Nietzsche should become popular, very popular even. The wonder would be if it were otherwise. It is true he finds few adherents among men and women who think. His reasoning is not sufficiently cogent. He gains his triumphs among the emotional type, and among the so despised masses. But over these his sway is hypnotic. Why? Because he is iconoclastic, says things the ordinary scholar would not even dream of saying and, most important of all, says them in an extremely telling way. Have you not caught the charm of *Zarathustra* even though you should abhor its content? Do you not see how its imagery, its ancient prophetic lore, its veneer of science, its positive tone, its reckless audacity, must impress those who are swayed by their emotions, who lack the critical faculty that distinguishes between fact and fiction? Comparatively few are able to formulate for themselves Nietzsche's world-view, but everybody, from the callow adolescent to the society woman who wants to be *en courant*, can dabble in Nietzsche. And there is hardly a phase of thought for which Nietzsche cannot furnish some appropriate vestment. The aristocrat can justify his domineering habits by appealing to Nietzsche's will to power and to his overman, the mystic can find satisfaction for his yearnings in contemplating the eternal recurrence of all things, the socialist, ignorant of or willfully overlooking Nietzsche's individualism can avail himself of the anarchist's attacks upon the social structure, and the libertine can find license for no end of excesses in Nietzsche's revaluation of all values.

There is a further reason, first pointed out I think by Stein (99, p. 7), why Nietzsche's philosophy should meet with such a favorable reception. Every marked cultural advance is accompanied or followed by a certain satiety, such as that which we see in the Greek cynics who followed the golden age of Athens, in Agrippa of Nettesheim at the time of the Renaissance, in Rousseau for the eighteenth, and in Tol-

stoy and Nietzsche for the nineteenth century. At such times there ensues a sort of intellectual dyspepsia which manifests itself periodically in men who know how to express feelings shared by many. Such an one was Nietzsche.

While there is no cause for marvelling at Nietzsche's rapid gain in favor among many men, there is ground for surprise when we see the large number of women who acknowledge the leadership of one who rivals Schopenhauer in his depreciation of woman. How account for this? In the first place, I think there is a rather widespread opinion among psychologists that there is something about the typical misogynist that fascinates many women. If there is any truth in this assumption, the problem we are just now considering would be solved in part at least. But there are other factors. Most of Nietzsche's woman-admirers seem to have studied him very little. What they know of him they have absorbed from some lecturer who pictures Nietzsche in glowing colors, or they may have read some of his charming letters, or possibly they have dipped into the interesting biography by Frau Förster-Nietzsche who pictures her brother a paragon of virtue, or they may have read an aphorism or two, perhaps even most of *Zarathustra*, but the great majority of them have never so much as begun to fathom Nietzsche's fundamental ideas and values. These women are fascinated by his style, or enchanted by his æstheticism, or filled with compassion because of the great calamity that overtook him. That is why even they worship Nietzsche.

Probably Nietzsche's most ardent admirers are those still in their teens—or only barely out of them. Nietzsche's antipathy against mere tradition, his enmity against all bonds, his detestation of what is abstract, his love of the superlative, his self-assertiveness, his iconoclasm, and his hero-worship, all appeal to instincts that are at the maximum in the adolescent. Gaster testifies to the effectiveness of this appeal. In his *Deutsche Lyrik* he says: "The fact that he [Nietzsche] has exerted and still exerts a most powerful influence upon the young is indisputable" (34, p. 241). The Professors Vogt and Koch tell us that Nietzsche's doctrines are eagerly devoured by the young, adding in the same breath that his influence is as sinister as it is great (103, II, p. 492). In a letter to the writer, from which I trust he does not object to my quoting a single sentence, Professor Paulsen of Berlin says that

Nietzsche's influence upon unripe minds is disturbing.¹ As for myself, I believe Baumeister (3, p. 2) is right when he maintains that teachers should take position against Nietzsche considering how sensitive the adolescent is to a philosophy of this type. It should require no broad argument to convince the open-minded that whatever we may say of mature minds no boy or girl should be allowed to read Nietzsche. Just because he knows how to defend brilliantly with superficial dialectics an assertion that subverts those very truths which we endeavor to inculcate, just because our boys and girls lack the total view that at once reveals the hollowness of Nietzsche's asseverations, just on that account we should place him without the slightest compunction upon the *index expurgatorius*. Eulenburg, in a lecture on *Schülersebstmorde*, declares that there is a considerable number of students whose suicide can be traced to the reading of Nietzsche, Zola, and Schopenhauer (5, p. 294). This is not at all surprising. To let the immature read Nietzsche is like pulling up a plant to see if its roots are growing. Nobody should be permitted to read this modern Thrasymachus until he has read and assimilated at least the first book of Plato's *Republic*. It is amazing to see how cleverly Socrates punctures the *Uebermenschen* of Thrasymachus. If ever, then certainly in the case of Nietzsche the warning is in order: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit" (Colos. 2: 8).

I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness to President G. Stanley Hall for counsel and criticism; to Dr. T. L. Smith for many a kind office; to Dr. Louis N. Wilson for many courtesies; and to a number of others who have furthered this study. Thanks are due the editor of the *Educational Review* for permission to reprint certain passages from my article on *Nietzsche's Educational Ideas and Ideals* that appeared in the *Review* for January, 1909.

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¹ Since writing this the genial Paulsen has died.

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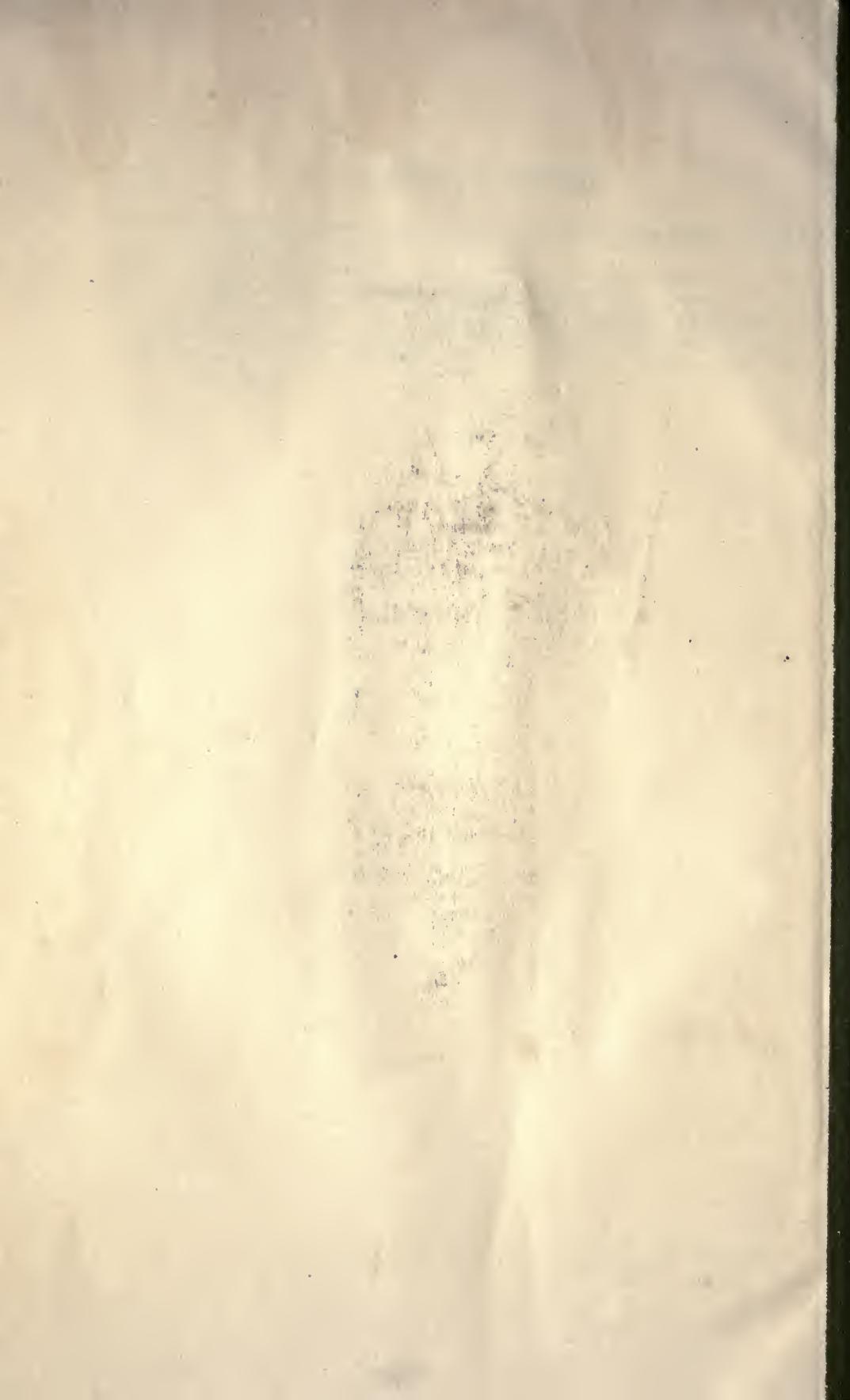
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